

THE BAD RESULTS  
OF GOOD HABITS  
AND OTHER LAPSES



J. Edgar Park

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## THE BAD RESULTS OF GOOD HABITS AND OTHER LAPSES



# THE BAD RESULTS OF GOOD HABITS AND OTHER LAPSES

By J. EDGAR PARK



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THE BAD RESULTS OF GOOD HABITS  
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## THE BAD RESULTS OF GOOD HABITS

IT is a curious fact that I have never felt quite at home with good people. I should have been a foreign missionary, for I have so much in common with the heathen.

But I know that I speak to a small band of kindred spirits when I say that there has always seemed to me to be an unnatural and strained atmosphere among the gatherings of professedly good people. In order to be convinced of this fact, one has only to visit a ladies' sewing circle at any church.

I knew a Scotch boy once who had to walk two miles to church, attend Sunday School beginning at a quarter

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past ten o'clock, stay for church which began at a quarter past eleven, getting back home about two o'clock, say the Westminster Shorter Catechism to his mother all afternoon, or read Sunday-School books with their moral skeletons indecently exposed, start for evening service at twenty past six, and remain for the prayer meeting which was held afterwards at which certain interminable interviews were held with the Deity for the benefit of the youthful humanity who were present. When he was taught that heaven was to be such a place "where congregations ne'er disperse and Sabbaths have no end," he sidled up to his teacher and said, "Ah, teacher, if I'm vera gude there a' the week, will I no' get doon to play wi' the wee deelies on the Setturdays?"

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“I am tired of lifelong habits — those disguises —

I’m tired of learning to be good;  
I would go and fling discretion far forever  
In the heart of a great wild wood.

“I would like to live my days like a wild, wild  
bird

Where the primroses lie dew-pearled,  
And to leave far behind my little, stiff good  
works

For the wicked enchanting world.

“Hark! There is the Church bell! My relations  
downstairs in a row

Boots nicely polished, are waiting — Let them  
wait! . . .

And yet I know

“I’ll take my prayer-book and demurely sit  
as I always do

None knowing how wicked I am — so quiet  
in the high-backed pew . . .”

MARJORIE WILSON

The heart of the particular side of  
human nature which I have to bring  
before you is this: That *respectable vir-*

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*tues are terribly apt to breed uninteresting vices.*

There are two kinds of goodness. There is what for want of a better term I must call *Respectable Goodness*, and there is *Adventurous Goodness*.

There is Respectable Goodness, standing with its long robes in the corner of the street, presumably praying; there is Adventurous Goodness, with a whip of small cords driving the whole Holy Fair out of the Temple. The first may be all right, but it is uninteresting. The second is marvelously interesting.

There is Respectable Goodness in some eighteenth-century Church of England divine standing in his cathedral droning over the everlasting service to the same verger. There is Adventurous Goodness in John Wesley riding and preaching in the unheard-of open

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air, without gown or bands, to tens of thousands of common folk throughout the whole length and breadth of England.

There is Respectable Goodness in the good Scotch elder or New England Deacon who assigned his wife and children their Sunday afternoon tasks and then slumbered in orthodox fashion in his ancestral armchair. There is Adventurous Goodness in the boy who sneaked out and ran into the woods and learned the notes of the birds, made friends with the flowers of the field.

And to-day there is a lot of respectable goodness in our churches. There is a kind of suburban soap that won't wash slums, and the little girl's report of the text that was not far wrong: "Many are cold, but few are frozen." There, too, you can see whole congrega-

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gations in the attitude of worship presumably praying. There, too, you can hear whole congregations singing words of the loftiest piety and aspiration. And outside the church there is to-day lots of adventurous goodness in unorthodox and almost disreputable places. Sometimes we all understand what the Englishman meant when he said: "You never saw a Christian in church, or a lady in a first-class carriage."

Roman Catholic critics may say that Protestantism is the worship of material success; that in spite of all high sounding phrases the supreme end of Protestantism is to raise people to a certain level of material well-being. A steady, industrious life is its end. It has not much use for contemplation, devotion, art, or any of the interests that may fill the higher spaces of the

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soul. It produces a prosperous, respectable, somewhat uninteresting life. Perhaps Romanism has less class spirit and more real religious devotion in its churches, because it does not worship respectability so much as Protestantism does.

I believe the lesson which the Roman Church has to teach the Protestants is this: "*There is more in life than the moral of it*; there is the mystery of it, and there is the beauty of it." Protestantism has been founded upon the idea that this universe was established solely and simply as a school of moral discipline for human beings; that all there was of life was the moral of it. The sermon is the thing. All else is the preliminary service. Now it is a peculiar fact that morals are always eminently respectable, but deadly uninter-

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esting. A church or a church service that is founded upon the theory that God is interested in conduct and in nothing else will be dull.

“The Reformation,” says one writer, “swept away the last shreds of Pagan purple, the last half-withered flowers of Pagan fancy, out of Christianity, and left it a whitewashed, utilitarian thing — a Methodist chapel, well-ventilated and well-warmed, but singularly like a railway station or a wash-house.”

Now the whole glory of Protestantism has been in its identification of the ethical with the religious. But the whole glory of Catholicism has been in its assertion that the religious is a wider circle than the ethical.

Good habits have bad results as long as they are followed for their own sake.

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The results of good habits only become wholly good when those habits have forgotten themselves and lost themselves in *personality*. Moral principles are impotent to touch humanity till they are clothed in beauty and mystery. And the full union of beauty and mystery is personality. You believe, for instance, that early rising is a good habit you ought to adopt. You get up at five o'clock some morning. What is the result? The result is that you are so conceited all the morning, and so tired and bad-tempered all the afternoon and evening, that there is no living with you at all. It is a good habit, I admit; just think of the enormous number of worms of whose unnecessary presence it has cleared the earth. But the poor worm did not profit by it. See that you do. If you must get up early

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in the morning, let your early rising silently justify itself by its works. Wait till some one asks you how you manage to get so much done in the day, before you talk about it. The attractive virtue must always be in solution in life.

Or think for a minute of Conscientiousness, that supreme glory of New England. Now conscientious people are generally hated. We fly from them and love to listen to the Child as she promises to lead us to “The Land of the Heart’s Desire”:

“Where nobody gets old and crafty and wise,  
Where nobody gets old and godly and grave,  
Where nobody gets old and bitter of tongue,  
And where kind tongues bring no captivity,  
For we are only true to the far lights,  
We follow singing over valley and hill.”

Conscientiousness, when followed for

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its own sake, produces a whole host of stuffy, uninteresting vices.

We all know those hateful prim people who draw themselves up and purse their mouths together and say, "Well, I don't like saying it, but I feel it my duty to say," and then with a gesture of the hand seem to break the film of ice on the top of an invisible pail of water and throw it all over the project at issue and down the back of the neck of every one present.

"Upon my word," said one poor man, weary with the perpetual preaching which he was always receiving from both pulpit and pew, in the old days evangelical, in modern days, ethical, — "Upon my word I don't know which is the greater plague, the old-fashioned nuisance called a soul, or the new-fangled bore called mankind."

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You know the *moral aristocrat*. His motto is “All or nothing.” He appears among temperance reformers often-times. He is generally so much under the influence of pie and doughnuts that he lumps together alcohol, smoking, and dancing as the devil incarnate. He is generally a she or a bunch of shes, who over their third cup of tea condemn the soldier’s cigarette.

We meet the moral aristocrat among politicians. One of the most hopeful movements for reform in one of our large cities was lost a short while ago because the reform candidate was a moral aristocrat. He was conscientious for the sake of being conscientious, and not for the sake of reform. He refused in a public manner even to shake hands with the other candidate. Part of us respects him for it, and yet it was

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but a type of the great tactical blunders which lost a campaign.

The English statesman John Morley, after his experience as Governor of India, recently said that one of the greatest hindrances to real reform in India was the impatient idealist who would not recognize the slow, practical steps which are necessary to bring any great reform about, but comes forward, saying: "Don't you admit that this is just and right? Why then don't you do it? If you don't do it immediately, then I shall have nothing more to do with you. I shall denounce you as a coward and a traitor."

Worse still, as the result of conscientiousness, is the moral prig who is always preaching. "Alice in Wonderland," one of the wisest books in the English language, is a grand parody

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and skit upon the morally priggish ways we have of bringing up children. Alice cannot say anything but she is corrected and told that is not the right way to say it; she has the lesson pointed out about everything. "I see nobody in the road," said Alice. "I only wish I had such eyes," said the King in a reproving tone, "to be able to see Nobody."

"There is nothing like eating hay when you're faint," said the King.

"I should think throwing cold water over you would be better," Alice suggested.

"I did n't say there was nothing better," said the King, severely, "I said there was nothing like it."

Most parents allow conscientiousness to bear its bitter fruit in them and become moral prigs full of corrections

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and lessons, walking sermons. The great reason why Mark Twain was so tremendously popular with us all was that he never preached. He often pretended he was going to, and then delighted us all when at the last moment we expected, "And now, dear brethren, what is the lesson of this for us —" he burst out laughing. "When you get mad, count 100 — and then swear."

"Be good, and you will be — very lonely."

"When in doubt tell — the truth."

Such are some of his excellent ways of charming us by not preaching and you can all remember scores of others.

Conscientiousness followed for its own sake results also in the morbidly tender conscience. Some of our good friends will argue for a good hour as to whether their conscience allows

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them to begin a letter to a stranger with "Dear." Ought we to give prizes to children? is another favorite topic for discussion for these delicate souls. Every subject that comes before them has to be subjected to the delicious subdivisions of this conscience, till real, instant, heroic action becomes impossible — till they carry such cultivated consciences within them that like Pascal they begin to wonder if it is right for them to kiss their own sisters. As for any real adventurous, thrilling heroic action, they are far too much in the condition of the mind of the centipede.

"The centipede was happy quite,  
Until the toad, for fun,  
Asked him which leg came after which,  
Which worked his mind to such a pitch,  
He lay distracted in a ditch,  
Considering how to run."

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Oh, the stuffiness of so much reputed goodness! Oh, the machine-made, mechanical goodness which is little but selfish obedience to laws and consciously formed prudential habits! It has got to such a pitch now that if you don't swear or drink, you have to prove in some definite way that you are a good fellow; the whole appearance of things is against you and the burden of the proof lies upon you.

It is a joy to meet a man like Paul, who was conscientious enough, but avoided the bad results of that good habit. He was no moral aristocrat; he said, "I am all things to all men if by any means I may win some." He was no moral prig; when he called men sinners he prefaced that statement with the confession that he was the chief (as the Reverend William Sunday

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would say) “of the whole bunch.” He did not cultivate a luxuriously tender conscience; when asked about eating meat which had been offered to idols, he said, “What is sold in the shambles, that eat, asking no questions.”

The habit of telling the truth is a good habit, you will say. Yes, but oh! with such bad results.

We are in the midst of a perfect epidemic of truth-telling at the present time. Apparently sane and responsible householders are sitting down and discussing such questions as these: Is it right to tell the children that Santa Claus is coming when it is only Uncle Jim dressed up? Or is it right to tell the child that the angel brings the new baby, instead of telling it the truth as to where the baby’s soul really did come from?

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But as you look in the eyes of a little baby, do you not recognize that angels had a great deal more to do with bringing her to you than doctors? As well might you step up behind your friend at the opera and whisper in her ear as she is enjoying "Lohengrin," that those are not real trees, but only pasteboard, that that is really not a God-sent man, but only an old Italian who in ten minutes will be enjoying a glass of beer behind the scenes, as to tell your child that Santa Claus is Uncle Jim. It is a lie.

The President is more than Woodrow Wilson. Marie Antoinette was more than the Widow Capet. Lohengrin is more than the Italian singer. Santa Claus is more than Uncle Jim. Oh! how our prosaical truth-tellers have tried to destroy all the poetry and

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beauty of the world! Mistral says if some old anatomical professor comes up to the lover and tells him that she whom he calls his goddess and peerless love is merely a grim skeleton stretched over, parchment-like, with skin, the lover would be justified in shooting the professor at sight. To all of which I say a most hearty Amen. "Oh, this talk of realism! A bird gives us the impression of flight, not of feathers!" "I would rather be damned for telling a kindly lie than saved for telling a cruel truth."

*Piety* is a good habit and the setting apart of a special time every day for Bible-reading and prayer. Some of us wish we were built that way, but Sam Walter Foss has clearly indicated to what ill effects even so godly a habit may lead:

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“Run down and get the doctor—quick!”  
Cried Jack Bean with a whoop;  
“Run, Dan; for mercy’s sake, be quick!  
Our baby’s got the croup.”  
But Daniel shook his solemn head,  
His sanctimonious brow,  
And said: “I cannot go, for I  
Must read my Bible now;  
For I have regular hours to read  
The Scripture for my spirit’s need.”

Said Silas Gove to Pious Dan,  
“Our neighbor, ’Rastus Wright,  
Is very sick; will you come down  
And watch with him to-night?”  
“He has my sympathy,” said Dan,  
“And I would sure be there,  
Did I not feel an inward call  
To spend the night in prayer.  
Some other man with Wright must stay;  
Excuse me while I go and pray.”

“Old Briggs has fallen in the pond!”  
Cried little ’Bijah Brown;  
“Run, Pious Dan, and help him out,  
Or else he sure will drown!”  
“I trust he’ll swim ashore,” said Dan,  
“But now my soul is awed,

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And I must meditate upon  
The goodness of the Lord;  
And nothing merely temporal ought  
To interrupt my holy thought."

So Daniel lived a pious life,  
As Daniel understood,  
But all his neighbors thought he was  
Too pious to be good;  
And Daniel died, and then his soul  
On wings of hope elate,  
In glad expectancy flew up  
To Peter's golden gate.  
"Now let your gate wide open fly,  
Come, hasten, Peter! Here am I."

"I'm sorry, Pious Dan," said he,  
"That time will not allow,  
But you must wait a space, for I  
Must read my Bible now."  
So Daniel waited long and long,  
And Peter read all day.  
"Now, Peter, let me in," he cried.  
Said Peter, "I must pray;  
And no mean temporal affairs  
Must ever interrupt my prayers."

Then Satan, who was passing by,  
Saw Dan's poor shivering form,

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And said, "My man, it's cold out here;  
Come down where it is warm."  
The angel baby of Jack Bean,  
The angel 'Rastus Wright,  
And Old Briggs, a white angel, too,  
All chuckled with delight;  
And Satan said, "Come, Pious Dan,  
For you are just my style of man."<sup>1</sup>

*Diligence* is the preëminent American virtue. Its bad results are apparent to all visitors to this land. Life here demands that you fill every moment; read the paper in the cars hanging on to the strap; that you get up and stand in the aisle five minutes before you come into the station. The great thing is to be doing something all the time; it does not matter so much what you are doing. This one good custom has corrupted the world. People have for-

<sup>1</sup> By kind permission of Lothrop, Lee & Shepard Co., from *Whiffs from Wild Meadows*, by Sam Walter Foss.

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gotten that just as every great building requires a fine site to make it seem great and beautiful, so every great idea requires atmosphere. *Poise, atmosphere, calm*, these are greater personal attributes than that of constantly being on the rush and if possible even seeming busier than you are.

“A wild and foolish laborer is a king,  
To do and do and do, and never dream.”

One of the latest biographers of Lincoln says truly of him, “He always loafed a little”; and years before Wordsworth had emphasized the same human need, when he said:

“Nor less I deem that there are powers  
Which of themselves our mind impress;  
That we can feed this mind of ours  
In a wise passiveness.  
Think you 'mid all this mighty sum  
Of things forever speaking,  
That nothing of itself will come,  
But we must still be seeking.”

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The hustler is one of the bad results of the good habit of diligence.

Opposed to that is the attitude of one who is in love with the moment — the sacramentarian.

It is worth taking time in this busy world to realize the mystery and beauty of our common daily lives. The hustler looks upon everything as a means to something else. The flower is good because you can pull it. The bird is welcome because you can shoot at it. Another day is a boon because you can make some money in it. No part of life is of value in itself. Everything is a means to something else. But the sacramental view of life looks at the passing day as the supremely great thing. Home courtesy, daily kindness, friendly fellowship, the beauty of the flower untouched by human hand and with the

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morning's dew upon it, the one exquisite moment of the bird's song heard in the woods — these are the really great things. These are the things the hustler is apt to trample down in his mad chase for some will-o'-the-wisp he calls success, but which he never is ready to settle down and possess. How sadly often the "Hill of Dreams," as Helen Lanyon sings, is bartered away for the drab, efficient, uphill drag of the useful drudge.

"My grief! for the days that's by an' done,  
When I was a young girl straight an' tall,  
Comin' alone at set o' sun,  
Up the high hill road from Cushendall.  
I thought the miles no hardship then,  
Nor the long road weary to the feet;  
For the thrushes sang in the deep green glen,  
An' the evenin' air was cool an' sweet.

"My head with many a thought was throng,  
An' many a dream as I never told,

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My heart would lift at a wee bird's song,  
Or at seein' a whin bush crowned with gold.  
And always I'd look back at the say,  
Or the turn o' the road shut out the sight  
Of the long waves curlin' into the bay,  
An' breakin' in foam where the sands is  
white.

“I was married young on a dacent man,  
As many would call a prudent choice,  
But he never could hear how the river ran  
Singin' a song in a changin' voice;  
Nor thought to see on the bay's blue wather  
A ship with yellow sails unfurled,  
Bearin' away a King's young daughter  
Over the brim of the heavin' world.

“The way seems weary now to my feet,  
An' miles bes many, an' dreams bes few;  
The evenin' air's not near so sweet,  
The birds don't sing as they used to do.  
An' I'm that tired at the top o' the hill,  
That I have n't the heart to turn at all,  
To watch the curlin' breakers fill  
The wee round bay at Cushendall.”

The last good habit of whose bad  
results I shall speak is the habit of

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*cheerfulness.* In this respect we live to-day in the midst of a great bacchanalia of nonsense.

Let me read you the parable of the two workers:

The first worker sat in a sunny room whose windows opened on the street. The door was ajar and he could listen to the conversation of the neighbors as they lingered at the corner. He whistled at his work. When he was not whistling he smiled. Above his bench hung a card and on it in large red letters the one word **GRIN**. Other mottoes hung around, **DON'T WORRY**, and **IT WILL BE ALL THE SAME IN THE END**. In this genial atmosphere he worked away, smiling and whistling and throwing a genial remark out to a passing neighbor from time to time, and the work he turned out was no good.

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The second worker sat upstairs and slaved in silence like grim death. He worried like anything lest he should not get his work just right. Neighborly friends knew enough of his ill-nature at such times to leave him alone. He did not look up to see if the sun was shining, but the idea of his own task was red-hot within him and he kept his eyes upon his work.

He did not live to be one hundred, but the work which he did will live forever.

The ancient landmarks that divide goodness from badness have stood for generations: on the good side of the partition are old maids of both sexes and none in stiff, ill-fitting Sunday clothes; missionary boxes for sending tracts to the heathen; gilt-edged divinity-circuit Bibles, all their poetry

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finger-marked by dogmatists; “fourteenthlies” and “fifteenthlies,” “Beloved Brethrens” and “Finallies” preserved in an indescribable mixture of cant and last week’s air; gaseous ignorance expanding rapidly at a high temperature of sentimental verbosity; holes-in-the-ground labeled “The Universe” and puddles labeled “The Ocean”; asylums for those who are scared of beauty or truth; and huge old-clothes shops where the rags of former ages are preserved and worshiped. As we look at a scene like that to-day, we cry, “How in the world did all this truck get on this side of the fence?” It all belongs on the other side. Quick as a wink we whip up the landmark and change it over, saying, “All these dullnesses are wholly bad.” They are simply flagrant examples of naughtiness.

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Vitality is goodness. To get your own vital spark burning bright and warm so that countless others will be attracted to it to warm their hands and hearts there — that is the only meaning there is for goodness. It is a hard task to keep from getting uninspired, uninteresting, dull, in life. This stodgy condition to which modern men are often subject is due largely to the fact that men are out of touch with the sources of inspiration. The greatest source of inspiration is friendly personal association with people different from one's own kind.

I suppose the narrowest lives lived by any men in the past were lived by kings who were entirely surrounded by courtiers. They never heard anything straight either about themselves or the outside world — everything was doc-

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tored to suit them. That is the position in which every modern man tends to find himself. He associates with those who say the kind of things he likes to hear—comfortable things, reads only such papers as say the things he himself would say, goes only to the TBM type of play; so that whole scores of modern men are absolutely isolated from any participation in the mind and life of the great host of their fellow-men. Our connection with people outside our own set tends to become “official” only.

Rich people and successful people have not much of an inner life as a general rule. When they get uneasy, they do not have to stay put and work the thing out, but they go South, or North, or fly along somewhere from the strain of thinking. But common people are

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under the iron hand of necessity, have to “stay put” and adjust their inner lives to the necessity, and so their point of view, when you can get it sincerely, is stimulating. The inspiration comes from the touch of human life with life. When you number among those with whom you can frankly interchange views an Irish policeman, a few Maine fishermen, a bank president or two, a number of lawyers, a few Italians or Poles or Russian immigrants, a washer-woman, some mothers of big families, a lot of high-school children, a few college graduates of recent years, last but not least some babies — then you are not likely to be in a rut yourself or dull in your outlook in life. But how many of us do? How many of us dare to talk absolutely sincerely to people of a different kind from ourselves?

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But people of any kind, good or bad, living or dead, sometimes get on your nerves; then is the time to revert back from people into the woods or the sea. The distant view of the mountains, the gleam of checkered sunlight falling into the bends and turns of the little trout brook, the center of the Atlantic on a starry night, with the white wake of foam, and the endless sea beneath the new moon, the first day of spring in the garden — these experiences are among the very richest that keep us from becoming dull drones in the hive of life, because they touch our ancient memory of a time long ago when we were not dull humans, but were submerged in it, a part of the glow and glory of it all.

But the time has now come to draw

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together the tangled thread of this discourse and show whither we have been tending. The question to be asked now is this, “Shall we not then adopt good habits at all?” If good habits have such bad results, shall we not avoid their formation altogether? To which the clear answer is, we are bound to form good habits, but we must not look upon them as ends in themselves, but only as means to a further and greater end.

Morality followed for its own sake becomes barren respectability and uninteresting routine.

Truthfulness followed for its own sake results in the destruction of the poetry and romance of life.

Diligence pursued for the sake of being diligent, results in the life of the superficial hustler.

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Cheerfulness sought after as an end in itself freezes upon your face the ghastly metaphysical grin.

You destroy the beauty of what appears to be a spontaneous act by confessing that it is only habitual or done out of a grim sense of duty.

A lonely stranger was cheered by having a gentleman talk to him in a friendly way as he was coming out of a New York church. But his soul was chilled when the conversation ended with the remark, "We always talk to every stranger here," as the man professionally turned aside to greet with identical effusion and phrases another victim.

"I came to make one more," was the soul-deadening indictment of her conduct brought by one lady against herself as she greeted the poor minister

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at the prayer meeting. He had hoped that she might even like to come.

Conscious habits are only useful as stepping-stones to unconscious personality.

“Our freedom, in the very movements by which it is affirmed, creates the growing habits that will stifle it if it fails to renew itself of a constant effort: it is dogged by automatism. The most living thought becomes frigid in the formula that expresses it. The word turns against the idea.” (Bergson.)

The bad result of every good habit is that you are so apt to fall in love with the habit and to forget its end. So many of us good people are merely good habits gone mad. We have been so prim and petty and precise, so superior and stodgy and Sunday-clothesy, so old-maidish and dogmatic and dull,

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so narrow and blind and bedraggled, looking for all the world as if, like Erasmus, we were descended from “a long line of maiden aunts.” What wonder that so many brilliant souls have shied at us and taken the wrong turning! The most dangerous and destructive force in Europe to-day was thus produced. The philosophy of Nietzsche, the source of German madness, was, we are told, originally “a reaction against his aunts.”

One of the most pregnant and beautiful ideas in all literature is the general scheme of Dante’s *Purgatorio*.

We see in it a great sunlit mountain, terrace above terrace, peopled by souls employed in acquiring good habits and purging themselves of bad habits. But ever and anon the whole living mountain trembles and bursts forth into a

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great song of praise as a soul graduates out of this condition into a higher. And upon the entrance into the terrestrial paradise which is at the summit of this mount of purgatory, we see what this higher condition is. It is the life in which all good habits are in invisible solution. Good habits have at last merged themselves into a healthy personality.

“Free, upright, healthy is thy will,  
And error were it not to do its bidding:  
Thee o'er thyself I therefore crown and mitre.”

Henceforth not Virgil, the guide of consciously formed and reasoned habits, but Beatrice, the spirit of spontaneous love, is to lead his soul onward into boundless life.

The end of life, then, is not obedience to principles, however good, it is the love of persons. Not good habits,

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but daring, original, clean personality. Not moral probity, but adventurous goodness. Not speaking the truth, but “truth-ing it” in love. Not hustling through life, but loving each moment and making it sublime; not grinning superficially, but touching the deepest springs of other personalities with joy: not, “I believe in things,” “I believe in the past,” but, “I believe in people,” “I believe in now.”

Life is not an old gentleman’s private school of character; it is a great adventure. We are a race going out on a great adventurous quest. God is not the spectator, looking on, nor a reviewer seeing the procession pass by his grandstand, nor a kind of infinite invalid watching over a dying world; nay, far rather God is the Pathfinder for us all, the great Forerunner, and

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Ideal of the human spirit. Wherever the human soul arrives in its chase breathless, there God has just been before. To live aright is to follow God.

“For Life has no glory  
Stays long in one dwelling,  
And time has no story  
That’s true twice in telling.

“And only the teaching  
That never was spoken  
Is worthy thy reaching  
The fountain unbroken.”

A. E.

Out of nothingness, and sleep, out of barbarism, out of savagery, here we go wave after wave of us flung over this single planet generation after generation.

Whither do we all go? That is what all poets, seers, prophets, and sages have ever been trying to express for us, in color and form, in music and song.

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We are out upon the mightiest adventure of the ages. This is no mere moral drill ground with God as appraiser and spectator, no mere testing school for habits. This is an original, adventurous campaign upon which we are out, with God as fellow adventurer, God's heart as well as our own thrilled with all the mystery and romance of it all, touched both by the splendor and flame, the shuddering and the tears, "finding even in the worst of tragedies the means of an otherwise impossible triumph."

There be some that say there is no news in being good. But there is a kind of goodness that is news, and that is when an individual, fresh, and spontaneous deed flashes out upon the world from the heart of an original personality.

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“I love my God as He loves me —  
Merrily.  
I feel His kisses in the breeze,  
And so I carve His name in trees —  
Why not?  
Ten thousand years misunderstood,  
He needs my laughter in the wood  
A lot.”

## THE DISADVANTAGES OF BEING GOOD

THE twin babies are what are technically known as "both kinds"; that is to say, he is a boy and she is a girl.

The boy, like all boys, is good. He is one of those delightful children who have learned in some prenatal state of existence the consolation of the thumb. His thumb is meat and drink and philosophy to him. If he loses his bottle, if his rattle is taken away from him, if his mother forgets him on the bed and he slips out and bumps his head on the floor, so that the plaster falls from the dining-room ceiling below, he does not open his mouth to cry at all. Nay, rather, with one somewhat reproachful

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glance at the universe, with a controlled gulp of inward distress, he elevates his thumb, and, with the sweetest sigh of resignation in the world, he slips it, in an unobtrusive and well-bred manner, into his little mouth. He then proceeds quietly and rhythmically to make the best of the bad situation. Yes, there is no doubt that red-headed George is a good boy. His mother is continually saying that he is no trouble at all.

Nor is there any doubt at all that Jane is a thoroughly bad child. Although she, like her brother, is only eight months old, yet she has already shown all the earmarks of a child of the devil, just as her brother is the paragon of all the angelic virtues. In fact, Jane is a typical girl.

It would be a sad task to repeat all Jane's failings. One must be charitable

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with our future legislators, and yet, when it comes to stealing all her brother's playthings out of his very grasp, and putting her fingers in his eyes to try to make him cry, and tearing the wall-paper off the wall near her crib — well, in spite of gallantry, one really has to notice such things. But perhaps the infernally bad nature of her disposition is best seen in her vocal exercises. I have often speculated, when a visitor in her home, as to what sound Jane could produce if she was having a leg sawed off slowly with a blunt saw. She makes such incredibly horrible and lamentable noises when her milk is not quite hot enough to suit her that it seems to me she has no margin of possibilities left for a more desperate occasion. The neighbors have a curious theory that a child never cries except when there is

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something wrong with it. Were I a neighbor with that theory, I would often believe that Jane was being tortured, when as a matter of fact Jane only wants to pull some one's hair, or demands her brother's rattle which he is enjoying for a few perilous moments, dodging his sister's infuriated grabs.

Now were the conventional views of morality correct, we should all desire to be good children like George, and pray that we may not be bad children like Jane.

But one cannot study the situation closely without seeing that there are very grave disadvantages in being good. George has never had a good time in his whole life. He is simply dressed and kissed, and told he is a good boy, and slung down somewhere and forgotten till Jane's voice informs the household

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it must be time for both children to be fed. Jane, on the other hand, has all the good times. She pulls the hair of all the visitors, and is toted around and allowed to come down with the rest of the family at all meal times. She has all the new toys and gets the most to eat. Why? Because she is bad in such a bewitching way. Because her mother and father simply have to do what she wants them to do if they wish to live in her house at all.

So one day, when his mother was not around, I took little George upon my knee, and, gently removing his thumb from his mouth, spoke to him as follows:

“My dear boy, goodness is a very estimable thing; in fact, a very valuable characteristic, indeed. Understand me now, I do not wish to minimize its

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value in the world at all. But, if the truth be told, lots of goodness is only tameness, and lots of badness is called bad only because it makes the people who think themselves good feel uncomfortable. Allow me to say, my dear fellow, that you would be a far better man if you were not so good. In fact, Jane is a far better man than you are. Jane is training her parents to unselfishness and hardihood. Jane's father before he was married would have considered it impossible to do his day's work unless he had his nine hours' sleep every night. Since Jane came he is very thankful to get four. Jane makes all the people about her think of some one besides themselves; she is saving people from being selfish. Though she is bad, every one likes her. And into the bargain she is having a

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good time herself; she is developing her lungs and her power of grasp. But you will excuse my saying that you are doing nothing for the people around you. For all that you do for them, they are as selfish and luxurious in their habits as ever. And you yourself are not getting the pleasure out of life you might! You will not be of as much use to the world. Your goodness is too negative. As the old hymn says:

“‘The whole world loves the quiet men  
Who sit all day as still as owls;  
But ‘t is needless to mention  
It gives its attention  
To the man who gets up and howls.’

“Or, to put the matter in another way, goodness to be any good must be interesting as well as good.

“And the moral is,” I hastened to add, as I saw George beginning to ele-

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vate his thumb again preparatory to closing the interview — “the moral is, either be bad like Jane, or be good in such an active and adventurous way as to be more interesting than she is.”

## HOW TO CONTROL YOUR FUTURE

YOU must, of course, choose your great-grandparents very carefully if you want to be a really great man or woman. The way you smiled just now was first invented by your great-grand-aunt - on - your - mother's side. Your delight in music was born in your great-grandmother's mother's soul in the parlor in the old farmhouse over the piano Sunday afternoons. And your dislike for cats is due to a fright her mother had in the barn when a kitten fell upon her in the dark. The desire to steal was strained out of your family six generations ago by a grand-uncle who refused to steal apples in his

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youth, though greatly tempted to do so. Any one has only to read one of your grandparents' old love letters to see why you are so romantic. In fact, you are not really "you" at all, you are merely the present phase of your family. Still, much depends upon you; your family, like the moon, runs through its various phases; you must see to it that in you it does not become fool. Heredity is a great force, and all you are is due to it. Somewhere within you is the race-home where the family of whom you are the visible representative live. There live the brute, the savage, the tribal chief, the crusader, the Mayflower passenger, the colonial dame, etc., to omit mention of many awkward poor relations. All of them at times try to pry open the door and stalk abroad into your life. Yes, there

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are even traces of Father Adam and Mother Eve in us all.

It may in fact be said of us all as it was said of a Chinaman of note:

“Now the father, whose name was Hang U. High,

Was the last of the race of the great I. Ligh,  
The father of Chinese history.

He was very proud of his pedigree,  
And even declared that his lineage ran  
In a line direct to the very first man.”

But heredity, while it is without doubt the greatest force in controlling your future, is like predestination in this, that we do not know anything about it. It works, but we do not know how it works. All geniuses can be explained by the forces of heredity as we wisely assert, only we do not know how to explain them. Few geniuses are the children of genius. LL.D., Ph.D., D.D. marries M.A., Litt.D., and their son is

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Fiddle D.D. Seeing that this is so, there are two main objections to starting the work of controlling your future by choosing your great-grandparents carefully: (1) You cannot do it, it is too late now; and (2) you would not know whom to choose if it were possible.

Seeing that these things are so, perhaps it might just be as well to accept yourself as your race has made you and try even with such poor material to control your future.

A visit to a clairvoyant is a very popular way of starting to control your future. She will astonish you by her information. Noticing the style of your clothes, she will tell you that you are a man or woman as the case may be. With an eye on the ring on your finger, she will reveal certain other secrets of your life. She will then proceed to as-

tonish you by her sketch of your future life. Every word she says will come true. She said you would have a great loss soon, and you had to have a tooth extracted the very next month. She said a dear relative would soon weep, and your mother's cousin lost a pet dog next week. She told you the business you were at would soon change; that the difficulty was coming; that, if you stood firm, you would get through it all right; that there was one who loved you, and the way you looked when she said that, told her that she was safe in going further; and she prophesied everything just as it has come to pass with you — and with every one else since the beginning of the world. Wonderful! Is it not? The fact is that there are so many coincidences in this world that any indefinite

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prophecy you like to make will come to pass. Try it yourself. Prophesy a few things about yourself at random: "I will meet an old friend soon, whom I have not seen for years. I shall have a curious dream. I shall have a great success." You will find that they will all come to pass sooner or later except that you will have forgotten, and you will have saved the clairvoyant's fee. This is a world where most people's lives are written on their selves to a Sherlock Holmes; it is a world of coincidences where any indefinite prophecy is sure to come to pass ultimately; it is a world where we remember the times the thing we are looking for happened and forget the times it did not happen, so it is a great world for clairvoyants.

But in the end they never help you

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much in controlling your future. How can you do it? Is it on Pull and Chance that we must depend? No, I think it is upon Work and Trust.

Efficiency in the circle within your own control, and confidence in the justice of the circle without your own control, possess these, and the future is yours.

After the mysteries of heredity and clairvoyancy it seems a paltry ending. Work as hard and as wisely as you can, trust the universe and the Father's heart at the center of the universe, and the world lies all open before you like the promised land. It may be years before you enter it, but it is yours all the time in certain prospect. Work never has failed in the end, trust never was disappointed in the end. The reason that so many of us have not controlled

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our futures better according to this simple law is that we would much rather sit in the sun on the piazza discussing heredity and clairvoyancy than work like Trojans at the appointed task which is to prepare us for the great future.

## THE FOLLY OF GETTING THERE

THE great thing in life is not to get there, it is to be getting there. The fun, as a general rule, is over when you do get there; the fun is on the way. But we have all got the extraordinary idea that fixity is somehow a nobler thing than progress; that there is more fun in having done a thing than in doing it. “Is n’t that a glorious view?” exclaims the automobile to his traveling companion, and in the same breath she answers, “Yes, it was”; for they are both interested in getting to Twenty-Third Street which is their destination. The “glorious views” through which they are passing are just “the preliminary serv-

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ices" to getting there. "I want to finish this novel," we say, just as we say, too, "I want to say I've seen this picture," and we take a passing glance at it. Like the Irish peasants, we all want to be "after doing a thing."

A group of visitors were being shown through one of the rooms of the National Gallery in London by an expert who accompanied the party and described each picture for them. The business director of the party had been listening to the description in a conscientious manner as he was looking up some railway time-tables which he held in his hand. When it was over, he wished to add his word to the expert's exposition. He said: "There is one thing, ladies and gentlemen, which has not been mentioned, I think, which I would like to have you all notice es-

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pecially. All the pictures in this room are originals — not copies, but originals. Now it is a great thing to be able to say you have seen an original of these pictures.” To which the expert added *sotto voce*, “Yes, and it is a greater thing to have seen them!” In his heart a passer-by added, “Yes, and it is a still greater thing to be seeing them!”

The absolute folly of our prevailing mood of mind in this respect is especially noticeable in our vacation tours. Our first end is to get packed. Then it is to get to the station in time for the train, and all the time in the train we worry as to whether it will get in, in time to catch the boat. On the boat we count up the run every day in the hopes of getting there a day earlier. We have a terrible scramble to get our baggage

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off first, in order that we may catch the first train for London. We do London, worrying much the last two days lest anything should occur to keep us from reaching Paris on time. We leave Paris with a sigh of relief that we have got there, at any rate, but hoping that nothing will delay the train which is to bring us to Berlin. Somewhere between Paris and Berlin we begin to worry about our homeward trip, and the Mecca of our souls now is "to get through things" in time to get the boat at Liverpool which is to bring us home. Once we are home, we feel we shall have "got there," and full felicity will be ours.

We missed the fun of packing, we missed the fun of going to the station in a cab with our trunk strapped on behind. We missed the fun of sitting

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in the train feeling we had nothing to do for six weeks and a visit to Europe before us. We missed the fun of lying for seven days like a primeval savage on our back in the sun thinking of nothing while the innumerable laughter of the sea waves stretched around us as far as eye could reach. We missed the fun of landing in England, of loafing in London, of reverting to Anglicism, of dreaming half a day in Westminster. We never let Paris have time to soak into us, and all we remember of Berlin is the intricacy of the time-tables of trains and boats to bring us back to Liverpool. We got there — that is to say, we got home again where we started from — and found too late that we had missed the fun *en route*.

All this is due to a defect in the hu-

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man mind, for which, if we like, we can blame Plato and Aristotle. It is the result of their static philosophy. Everything must be motionless before it is worthy of investigation: so they seemed to think as they reduced life to essences and states. So we seem to think as we refuse to take our joy on the wing as it is alive, and rush on to kill it and have it canned, thus killing the real life of joy which is in coming and going, nay, most of all, in becoming. So the parents pray for stage after stage of their children's life to be safely reached, worrying through each one about their passage to the next, till at last they do get there; that is, all the children are safely married and away from home, and the lonely birds in the empty nest begin to wonder if they could not have enjoyed their children

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more in each of the different stages as they were going along.

There are two useful principles in life which, if remembered, will do a great deal to correct this defect in our popular attitude toward life.

*The happiest thing in life is not to get something: it is to be doing something.*

Fight as we will against it, we all have implicitly at the back of our minds the assumption that the end of all endeavor is somehow to attain to the dignity of sitting still in the full possession of many things. “Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years: take thine ease!” That idea in one form or another is El Dorado of all our hopes. As a race we have not even been able so far to imagine a heaven that we would not be all deadly tired of in a week. It is because all the heavens we

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have been able to imagine are expressed in terms of these two ideals, possession and sitting still. We have our golden harp, we sit upon our throne. The reason why all our heavens are dull is a simple one. In the slang American phrase it is because there is "nothing doing." Receiving is possessing, but giving is doing something and is more blessed. Let us all make up our minds to it; no combination of outward circumstances, no possessions of any kind, can give us happiness; happiness is a state of doing and of becoming. No state of circumstances that you could devise would give it to you except by a corresponding change in yourself. Happiness is an inward activity of the self, for the second principle is this, *The most important thing in life is not to have got anywhere, it is to be going somewhere.*

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If to get there is the great end of life, then the important thing about you is how you die. We are all going either into the grave (it is a terribly dangerous world this, and it is a question whether any of us will get out of it alive), or we are going to shrink and shrivel up into extreme old age (and the end of that can be seen in the experience of Methuselah, who upon his nine hundredth birthday said he was feeling very well if only his shoe-strings would not flap so in his face). If the end is the thing, such is the end. But the end is not the thing, the thing is how we go along, how we behave at breakfast and in the street car on this day of the year of our grace. In your home the end of all things is of comparatively little importance compared with the passing day. The question is

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not as to whether you will live to be a well-preserved old gentleman like Methuselah; it is not as to whether you will get your soul safely saved in heaven; it is as to whether you say your word of cheer and do your deed of kindness in the light of this dull, common-place, every-day world. Breakfast is the test of all Christianity; at breakfast it shall be known. Christianity is the philosopher's stone which turns every moment it touches into gold. To be saved is to be in love with the moment.

You remember Marzial's little tragedy concerning the man who thought the end of life was to get there? —

“She was only a woman, famished for loving,  
Mad for devotion and such slight things;  
And he was a very great musician,  
And used to finger his fiddle strings.

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“Her heart’s sweet gamut is cracking and  
breaking  
For a look, for a touch — for such slight  
things;  
But he’s such a very great musician,  
Grimacing and fing’ring his fiddle strings.”

Each moment comes to us as neutral. To each of us is given a magic wand with which to touch it and transfigure it. Our touch will make it either an angel or a devil. Toward each one of us now are coming, in strong, level flight, countless thousands of these angelic possibilities. One touch from us, and they may become for all time beautiful spirits. But he who rushed through life in order to get to heaven, when he arrived there found it empty, swept, and garnished; and, when he asked, “Where are the angels?” the answer came: “You have been passing them unnoticed with the swiftness of

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lightning, sixty every minute for the last fifty years. The only angels in heaven are those you bring with you.” Being tired and disappointed, he asked for his throne upon which to sit down, but he was informed that there are no seats in heaven because there is no weariness there. What we call struggle here, there is peace. What we call love here, there is rest. Heaven is a road, not a hall.

“This common road, with hedges high,  
Confined on either hand,  
Will surely enter by and by  
Some large, luxurious land.

“The many wayfarers on foot  
Have toiled from stage to stage,  
And others roll along the route  
With easy equipage.

“All seek, methinks, that palace hall  
Whereon my thoughts are set.  
Press onward! Hear the angels call!  
‘Hasten! ’T is farther yet!’

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“Dreamer! In vain thou hastenest;  
That golden throne resign;  
Take by the road thy joy, thy rest;  
The road, the road is thine.”

## THE REVISION OF THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

I SEE by the papers that there is a movement afoot for the revision of the Ten Commandments. This comes as a great relief to me, as I have never felt quite easy about them in my own mind. It has always seemed to me that they are written from the wrong point of view.

Now there are but two points of view from which the world may be regarded. You may look at the world from the inside of the automobile or you may look at the world from outside of the automobile, in as far as the dust will permit you to see any world at all. My objection to the Ten Commandments has always been that they

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are written from the inside of the automobile, while all my life I have been outside in the dust and smell. Let us look at them for a few moments, that we may see if this analysis is not correct.

The first commandment insists that I shall not dare to take as my God any god except the god of the man who is in power. The poor man must not worship a god of his own: he must worship the god which the upper classes think best for him.

The second commandment declares that the poor and unlearned man must make no tangible representation of his god for an aid to his worship. The rich and educated do not need any such help to grasp their metaphysical deity; therefore the poor and concrete-minded man must not have it.

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The third commandment infers that, while the favored classes can laugh at the petty gods of the submerged tenth, it is blasphemy for the ignorant to scoff at the god which the scholars consider best for them.

The fourth commandment is the pronouncement of a class rich enough to have “manservant and maidservant and cattle” as to how other people shall keep the weekly holiday in such a way as not to annoy the leisured and cultured classes at their worship or their golf.

The fifth commandment can be kept only by those successful enough to be able to save a little something to put by to care for their parents in old age.

The sixth commandment against murder is always the safeguard of tyranny.

## REVISION OF THE COMMANDMENTS

The seventh commandment is the precept of a class moneyed enough to marry and support a home whenever it will.

The eighth commandment is the bulwark of the propertied classes and always has been against those upon whose shoulders they are standing.

The ninth commandment is the denial of the right of the consumer to investigate the ways of the producer lest he say unjust things.

The tenth commandment preaches the time-worn lesson which the rich charity visitor has ever preached to the poor family — that they ought to be content with their lot, and not ask any fairer division of the good things of this life than God has vouchsafed to grant at the present time.

I should like to make my suggestion

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as to a real revision of these Ten Commandments from the point of view of the man outside the automobile:

1. Thou shalt not insist that other people shall worship thy god.
2. Thou shalt not dictate how other people shall worship their god.
3. Thou shalt not take the name of the gods of others in vain.
4. Remember to keep one day in seven sacred to the health and happiness of others.
5. So live that every one may have a chance to honor his parents and provide for them in old age.
6. Thou shalt not make the toiler hate thee and thy class by living an easy, idle, and heartless life. Thou shalt care for the health and safety of those who work for thee as if their health and life were thine own.

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7. Thou shalt pay thy workers enough so that they can marry and support a home of their own in comfort. Thou shalt not pay thy women workers less than enough to support an honest life.

8. Thou shalt not tempt thy fellow-man to steal by treating him merely as a cog to be worked or left idle at pleasure in the dividend-producing machine.

9. Thou shalt not manipulate thy capital in such an inhuman manner that the toilers and consumers shall in the end come to believe every evil against thee.

10. Thou shalt not display thy wealth in such a manner as to make others less wealthy feel uncomfortable. Thou shalt not dress thy children so expensively as to make the hearts of

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all other children and of their parents to be sore within them.

But as the very young curate said to the London congregation, "But, dearly beloved, we must not be too hard upon the twelve apostles." Perhaps the meaning in my revised form of the Ten Commandments is really in great part implicit in them in their original form. Perhaps it is only because most of the editions published of them have been for automobile use only that they have sometimes seemed to be a weapon to be used by the propertied and successful classes against the toilers of forge and furnace and those who are down and out.

At any rate, there is a better commandment than any of them which at the same time includes all that is best in them all. These are but fences placed

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at the most dangerous points to save some of those who may have strayed from the Way of Life; but up along the whole mountain-side, in the Way itself, like a gleaming thread in the sunshine, there runs the Golden Rule, to follow which is perfect freedom.

## WHY MINISTERS PLAY GOLF

THE only really grave defect in Gutmann's monumental work, "The Sport of the Clergy," is the omission of an adequate treatment of the game of golf. It is monstrous that in a work where one whole volume is devoted to Surplices and fully ten pages to Theology, that Golf should be passed over with a paltry paragraph. For the benefit of any of our readers who may be outside the reach of Mr. Carnegie's generosity we quote this inadequate paragraph. Gutmann, after speaking of the various outdoor sports favored by the clergy, such as street-walking, doorbell-ringing, and en-graving, comes at last to golf which he defines as follows:

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“Golf is a game indulged in by Presbyterian ministers. It is played with short poles similar to those formerly used to take church offerings. A man and a boy generally play together. The boy carries a bag with the various poles. The man selects *seriatim* the poles from the bag. The game, the interest of which it is said cannot be appreciated by an outsider, includes walking over certain fields called links<sup>1</sup> with the boy. The poles are frequently used to remove portions of the turf, so that the succeeding party can follow the tracks of the one going before” (pp. 164, 165, vol. vi). Now altogether, apart from the serious omission of all mention of the ball, which, in the case of

<sup>1</sup> A term derived from the German, because, in good play, after any stroke, as much of these as possible should be *left*.

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all but the merest beginners' play, forms such an important feature of the game, this account is upon other grounds entirely misleading. For very few clergymen, and those only in the larger churches, can afford a caddy at all. As a matter of fact, most ministers carry their own bag of staves.

Passing from Gutmann's bulky work we find this subject noticed next in an excellent little brochure on Golf published by the Evangelistic Association. The theory advanced here as to why ministers play golf is, however, erroneous. The supreme interest of the game, according to this authority, centers upon the search after and recovery of the lost. Now it can only be stated that this is a mere outsider's view of the game. To an onlooker the links often do seem to be covered with groups

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of individuals knee-deep in weeds or among bushes or poking their clubs, as the poet beautifully says, "by the banks of streams," all apparently in search of something. The present writer himself once saw an outsider acutely observing a member of such a party who was on his hands and knees among some nettles looking down a hole in the ground. After some logical thought this friend asked the following question, "Have you lost your ball?" This astounding supposition was immediately corrected by the player, who informed the questioner politely of his mistaken inference, adding that the object of his search was the ten tribes of Israel.

The cheerfulness with which this reply was given probably misled the well-meaning writer in the above-men-

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tioned publication of the Evangelistic Association. The fact is that non-players in general are apt to place too much emphasis both upon the movements of real estate and upon the side excursions which are a mere incident in golf and of very little real importance in the game itself. They are but the relaxations indulged in by players from the strain of continuous playing which is intense. It is necessary, before coming to the real solution of this subject, to dispense with yet one other incorrect theory.

The Rationalistic Press in its Tracts for the Times No. 265, under the caption, "Why Ministers Play Golf," advances the theory that the reason is simply this, that in golf everything depends upon a good lie. The Rationalistic Press is avowedly inimical to the

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cloth, and we cannot help feeling that some of this bias has crept into their analysis of our problem; for, as a matter of fact, the actual state of the case — we state for the benefit of the Rationalistic Press — is simply this, that in golf a good lie is better than a bad lie.

Coming, then, to the really serious discussion of this great question, we may say, from an insider's point of view, that there are two main reasons why ministers play golf.

(1) A great deal of mystery has always centered around the question, Who made the golf links?

Beginners at the game are often worried over this problem. Only experience can bring at last home to the soul the true answer. As one goes on with the game, one finds every hole

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guarded with diabolic traps, every green gratuitously broken by humps and hollows, every long drive spoiled by hazards, real and suggested. Suddenly the real fact that every golfer knows, but seldom speaks about, dawns upon one: the Devil made the golf links. The whole game is a metaphor. The white ball is the soul. It is the duty of the priest to guide the unsullied soul from stage to stage over a course filled with traps, bunkers, and hazards, by the Evil One himself. He who has to lay the fewest strokes upon the soul he guides safely home wins the game. Golf, then, seemingly only a game, is really a ritual. It is especially popular with the low-church and protestingly Protestant clergy, who find in it the same expression of high ideals which the priests of other faiths embody in the

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performance of elaborate rites and ceremonies. And golf has the advantage of being in the open air.

(2) The second reason why ministers play golf is somewhat different.

It is well known that the ministry is a very irritating occupation. Ministers must accept all sorts of abuse silently. They must with doormat humility be all things to all women. The result is that, being but human, they accumulate a vast supply of unexpressed profanity. Some ministers work this off upon their wives. But the nobler sort work it off in the long, profane silences of golf. It is not merely in the viciousness with which the ball (for the time being representing some irritating parishioner) may be struck that relief comes. It is still more in the silence that falls like balm upon the players

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when an easy putt has been missed. In ordinary life silence is unexpressive. In the game of golf such silence is eloquent, almost eschatological; indeed I myself have sometimes noticed a distinct sulphurous odor upon the putting green during such a silence. Many a minister has worked off three weeks' store of parish worry in one such golphic silence.

Little more can be said in the present state of our knowledge upon this profound subject. One can only conclude by referring to what is, after all, the most exhaustive study of the inner significance of the game Professor Niblick Green's great work, "The Psychology of Golf" (Putt Lectures, Saint Andrew's, 1903). In chapter five we find the following suggestive paragraph with which we conclude this study:

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“The worst hazard is a mental hazard. It is as hard to hit a golf-ball as to speak in public, and for the same reason. The following three rules will be a great help to beginners in both cases:

- “Keep your eye on the ball;
- “Keep your feet on the ground;
- “Carry your stroke through.”

## SOME INEXPENSIVE HOUSE-HOLD LUXURIES

THE necessities of life have all risen in price, but the real luxuries are still inexpensive. Bread and meat are dear, but love and jokes are as cheap as sunshine and moonshine. Necessities are so costly that almost the only way an honest man can live is by stealing. But in this respect one can have a perfectly good conscience about the real luxuries, for like the best kisses they must by their very nature be stolen. They are the fairy fruit which must be snatched at only in passing and enjoyed incidentally, as almost inadvertently.

In the social life of the home we of-

ten come to the edge of a precipice or up against a stone wall. In a moment we know we shall be over the edge; in a moment there will be harsh words and estrangement, with or without temper and tears. Or it may be we feel ourselves helpless in the face of an unspeakable situation, desperately impotent. Now the real title of this article (as the knight explained to Alice) is "Luxurious ways of meeting conversationally difficult domestic situations."

"It is a good thing," said the sage, "to know the truth and to be able to talk about the truth; but it is a better thing to know the truth and be able to talk about palm trees."

There should be a large picture of the irrelevant palm trees in every home. When Martha and I get into

a discussion now, we seldom run the syllogistic stage into its infinite series, as we used to do, but according to a tacit understanding, the victory is accorded to the one who is the first to notice "How cool the palm trees look tonight!" The palm trees stand for the impotence of logic to settle anything worth settling. After we have talked about them for a while, and about our neighbor's dog, we are conscious that there was nothing to be discussed. The irrelevant settled it for us.

So, too, when the junkman has offered you a dollar and you have said you will not take less than two for your old stove, do not let the junkman be the first to notice the weather and comment upon the prospect of early rain, but introduce your palm trees immediately. In nine cases out of ten you

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will find that the irrelevant will bring up his price.

But the greatest value of palm trees is their humanizing influence. When you get desperately busy and worried and serious, when the market is bad and will keep on growing worse if people do not attend to what you say, when things are all going to the dogs simply because men will act so idiotic, though it is perfectly clear what they ought to do — then it is well to ease off your intense voice when you get home for a while and talk about palm trees. They afford great scope for discussion, and after you have dwelt upon them for a few moments from various points of view, you will find that either you or the other people will have got sense.

Blessed is the man who, going

through the ways of this world, dusty with all its infinitely little gibble-gabble and humbug, yet remains serene and happy because it all affords him such an opportunity to talk to his heart's content upon that greatest of all subjects, palm trees. The saturated solution does not crystallize till some irrelevant object is introduced into it; it will crystallize beautifully around a straw. In a similar way, thought often crystallizes around a palm tree.

Hamerton writes to a young friend, referring to a family scene he had witnessed: "Your mother asked you to what part of America your friend B. had emigrated, and you answered, 'The Argentine Republic.' A shade of displeasure crossed your mother's face because she did not know where the Argentine Republic was. You impru-

dently added that it was in South America. ‘Yes, yes, I know very well,’ she answered; ‘there was a great battle there during the American War. It is well your friend was not there under Jefferson Davis.’”

Hamerton goes on to say, “That was a perfectly magnificent chance for you to hold your tongue.” But who of us would have done it? Not one. We would all have snorted as the war horse for the fray, and affirmed, and explained, and at length fetched the atlas to prove to one indignant and blinded with tears that she had become confused between the Southern States and South America.

Reader, I see you are hanging your head; so am I. Fellow seekers after truth, lend me your ears that I may whisper into their furry depths: “In

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the life of the home there is a time to speak, and a time to keep silence."

Some people have not brains enough to be silly themselves. But few people can resist the solvent influence of a piece of really excellent fooling introduced at the right time. We all of us, of course, perceive the profound philosophy which underlies the remark of Mr. Weller, Senior, that "circumwended" is a "more tenderer" word than "circumscribed," but we do not apply this principle with enough of our forefathers' inflexible moral courage to the life of the home. The irrelevant is sometimes only irritating, silence, infuriating, but there are few situations that will not yield to the subtle influence of the irrationally absurd.

George Meredith begins his simple

little ode, "To the Comic Spirit," with the words, "Sword of Common Sense!" It is hard to tell whether the rest of the poem is an explanation or an exemplification of the comic spirit, but this line is both. Fellow mariners, in the wild adventure of domesticity, take this sword; with it you will be able to cut many a Gordian knot.

Humor takes brains; foolishness does not, and it is of foolishness I speak; humor is too subtle a product for this work. The worst quarrel which Martha and I have ever had — which brought us, indeed, both to visit the public library at the same time surreptitiously to look up the conditions of the divorce laws — this worst quarrel was as to whether there had been two or three clergymen officiating in an Episcopal church we had attended that morn-

ing. I remember how just at its darkest hour that misunderstanding was cleared up by an excellent piece of foolishness which Martha sprung upon me. I should gladly tell you of it, for the very thought of it makes me feel wiser and better still. But the peculiarity of all foolishness is that, being so brainless, it is impossible to retell it.

But if all these fail; if the spark of irrelevance goes out into darkness again, if silence is barren, if foolishness falls flat, is there no last desperate resort? One thing only can I recommend. I know it seems an old-fashioned remedy, but it sometimes does work. I am inclined to think that a man talks more sense during his courtship than at any other time in his life. There are two philosophic lines which are too obscure for the ordinary mind to grasp,

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and yet which contain more sound sociological verity than any other two lines ever written upon the social question. They are worth your study. They are these:

“A little bit of love  
Makes a very happy home.”

## UNORTHODOX INTER- PRETATIONS

WHEN I was a child, I had not only to learn the Ten Commandments, but also what were called Scripture proofs for each of them. These proofs consisted of morsels of Scripture wrested from their context, which supported in their fragmentary form the contention of each particular commandment. I remember satisfying my infant sense of the injustice of this proceeding by making out a set of commandments each of which was the direct contradictory of the orthodox edition, and finding for each of these new commandments a number of Scripture proofs. For instance, I remember these:

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6. Thou shalt kill. 1 Kings 18 : 40;  
1 Samuel 15 : 3; Psalm 137 : 9.

7. Thou shalt commit adultery.  
Genesis 29; Judges 5 : 30.

8. Thou shalt steal. Exodus 12 : 36;  
Genesis 27 : 24.

I never dared show this revised list to any one, but derived much inward satisfaction from it. As I have grown older, I have been settled in the opinion that most theological arguments have been on a like uncomfortably reversible basis, and that most heretics have had more truth upon their side than it was safe for them to have without a corresponding sense of humor. When as a boy, I quoted to one of my near relatives the text, "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh," as a justification of my behavior on Sabbath afternoon, he professed to be

shocked beyond measure, and told me that my soul was in jeopardy, and “One, who even your irreligious nature must confess is the greatest authority in the world, has said, referring to the worth of one’s soul, ‘All that a man hath will he give for his life,’” whereat I shocked him still more by getting him to look up Job 2 : 4 and see who it was he considered “the greatest authority.” Samuel Butler gives this advice to the young: “Do not be too much carried away by the Bible. Remember it presents only one side of the case. All the books were written by God.” There is something to be said for this position, as the negro preacher said, after quoting to his congregation some terrible verses about the torments of the damned, “Brethren, I am not responsible for the composure of this book.”

On the other hand, I sometimes still like to dream that, supposing the book was not all written by God, but by hard-headed and wise men and women, perhaps there is more common sense and less mystery-only-to-be-interpreted-by-one-who-has-our-diploma in it than is generally supposed.

I heard a fool preach a sermon last summer upon the needless expense of educating ministers. He said all that was needed to become a soul-searching preacher was a common-sense reading of the Bible and some experience. "After all," he said, "the most effective sermon in its results which we read of in the New Testament was preached by a rooster, and all he said was 'Cock-a-doodle-doo.'" Without going just as far as this rooster, yet there is a great deal to be said for consulting common

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sense rather than what generally passes as scholarship in the interpretation of the Bible.

I was greatly struck with this truth one Sunday upon coming out of a church where a most "scholarly" sermon had been delivered upon the casting of the evil spirit out of the Gada-rene demoniac and the subsequent disaster to the swine. The Higher Criticism had had its innings, and the con-gregation was dismissed to think over the results, if any, by themselves. On the way out an old farmer said to me a word more illuminating as to the spirit of the whole passage than all the ser-mon had been. He said he "guessed the thoughts in the hearts of some fel-lers would make even a herd of pigs that shamed that they would drown themselves." Now that is what I mean

by a genuine unorthodox interpretation of the Scriptures. So, too, was that of the farmer's wife who at the celebration of the thirtieth anniversary of her marriage told me that her favorite passage of Scripture was that telling about the marriage at Cana of Galilee, and, upon my asking her the feelings that led to this preference, said: Well, how the Lord did it at that marriage she could not propose to say, nor how he had done it at her own marriage. But that he had done it, she knew, for — and here she looked lovingly at her husband who was standing beside her — for the Lord had turned the waters of life into wine for her that day.

There is, of course, a good deal of mental fumbling about these common-sense, unorthodox interpretations of the Bible, but it is my belief that the

sense in which the narratives are understood by the great majority of humble, unsophisticated readers is quite satisfactorily unorthodox. The liberal school are apt to set up what is almost a straw man, the person who holds every word and phrase in a literal manner, and believe, because this form is the only form in which the faith of hosts of ordinary folk has been intellectualized, that therefore it is the practical method of their interpretation. Formally they believe many such things about the Bible because they have been so taught, but practically they interpret the Bible in a way that does credit, I generally find, both to their head and their heart. This, of course, does not refer to Bible-class interpretations, which are naturally dictated by the dogmas of the society

which supports the Bible class, but it does refer to the interpretations of humble lovers of the book as they read it for their own use, and as they speak of them only to close and confidential friends.

“The baskets! The baskets!” said one thoughtful old lady, looking up from her Bible one afternoon. “Where in that desert place did the twelve baskets come from to fill with fragments? I think I know,” she said after a pause, with a quiet smile — “I think I know. I think every family in the crowd had done just what the disciples had done, and had brought a basket full of provisions for their day’s outing. Each family was so selfish that it was hiding its lunch under togas and beneath shawls, lest there would not be enough to go round if they began to divide it. Every

one was afraid that, if he shared his lunch with his neighbor, there would not be enough left for himself. Later they meant to retire when unnoticed, and devour it in secret. But Jesus broke down that selfishness effectively by suddenly calling openly for the little lunch which he and his disciples had with them. In spite of sly signs and hints and whispered protests on the part of these companions of his, it had to be produced. Then he began simply to distribute it to the multitude, as if there had been more than enough for everybody. He did it as if it was the most natural thing in the world to give away what little he had. I can see the eyes of the crowd as they strained forward to see what the Master was doing now. Lo! he was distributing in the most generous and open-handed way

his own little store to the multitude. This could not be allowed to go on; the Master himself must not be allowed to go hungry; and all over the crowd, at first shamefacedly, later with more and more freedom, from men's pockets, from under women's shawls, from behind bushes and heaps of stones, the baskets began to appear, big and little, which had been hurriedly put together on the start from home. Now Jesus had given away to those directly around him all his own little store, and now one after another was rising from various parts of the crowd and bringing up to the Master baskets and loaves and fishes and packets of food. They offered these to him for himself, but, instead of taking them himself, he took them also out of the hands of the donors and began to pass them around among the

multitude. More and more food was discovered and passed around till at last these people, who had at first been so selfish and secretive, found to their astonishment that, when they all became generous with their store, there had been among them all the time far more than enough to satisfy the hunger of every one present. Then the Master, with one of those little touches of care and reverence for all God's gifts which characterize his life and teaching, commanded that the fragments of his first love-feast should be picked up and placed in the baskets which were now strewn empty around. That is what the Lord of Life can do."

Now I am sure that this interpretation of the feeding of the five thousand will not appeal so generally to any of us as the orthodox miracle-interpreta-

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tion, because the lesson of the latter way of looking at it is that we should expect miracles (which we are all lazy enough to enjoy expecting), whereas the social lessons of this old lady's unorthodox explanation are awkward, not to say inconvenient.

## THE HAPPINESS OF BEING GROWN UP

HERE are so many things to be thankful for. It never struck me until I was buying my new pair of shoes for two dollars more than I paid six months ago, how thankful I should be that I was not a centipede.

In the same way it was when passing “the house where I was born” that it suddenly flashed upon me how thankful I should be that I was grown up. I sat for years dangling feet that would not touch the floor and wishing I was grown up. I stood for years at the nursery window watching my father omnipotently leave the house and go down the street and turn the corner at last which led to the great, free world of

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fairyland. My gods for many a year were men of thirty and forty, and my ideals boys of seventeen and eighteen. Now I am a god myself, but somehow it does not seem as nice as I thought it was going to be. I can rise up at this present moment and go down the street beneath the admiring gaze of another nursery window and turn at last the street corner that leads to the big, free world, but there is no romantic thrill at that corner now; around it there are just more streets and more houses. I am at perfect liberty not to eat my oatmeal at breakfast, but instead to steal down the street to that tempting store and buy candy; but the sense of this freedom does not intoxicate as once it would have done.

Yet, as I say, just as I was passing “the house where I was born,” it all

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came back to me how thankful I should be that I was grown up. Suddenly I got over all this cant about wishing I was a child again, and about childhood as being the happiest time in one's life. Suddenly I felt that at last I had grown to man's estate, that I had at last a chance to be "very proud and great, and tell the other girls and boys not to meddle with my toys."

It was glorious. I wanted to stop that anxious-looking man who was passing and tell him to cheer up, that I had just discovered that we had grown up, that there was no one to prevent us from skipping school that afternoon and going to the ball game.

But a second look, a second thought, convinced me that we had all lost it; we have all lost the sense of the happiness of being grown up. We look at the

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past sentimentally, at the present discontentedly, at the future anxiously.

Childhood? Who would be a child again? So would not I. Poetry is all very well, but it is in the poet's imagination. What are the three greatest factors in the life of the child? Agonizing, inarticulate, misunderstood colic — everlasting, irritating, "Don't do that's" — burning envy and admiration of the freedom of grown-ups. The three agonies of childhood you and I do not, of course, remember when we long in verse for infancy again, but ask any six-months-old child and he will not deny that my analysis is correct.

Let us rejoice, therefore, fellow grown-ups! We are what we dreamed one day we might be. Misunderstood colic is of the past. We now say "Don't do that" to other little people.

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We are the spankers and no longer the spankees.

In conclusion, if we dive into the depths of this profound subject we shall arrive at this valuable truth, that only people who keep their child-heart continue to appreciate right through life the happiness of being grown up. We have analyzed this forgotten dark side of childhood, but there is a glory in childhood which has been best expressed by Meredith in this phrase, "The rapture of the forward view." You only appreciate this side of happiness when you feel that your feet do not quite touch the floor yet, when you keep on looking forward to being more grown up than you are at present, when you still have your gods among living men and women. The rapture of looking forward to greater powers of

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self-expression, to greater freedom of personality, to greater maturity in the spiritual life, this is the joy of those of us who are incurable children.

The greatest happiness of being grown up is the happiness of finding one's self still a child.

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## THE WORLD, THE FLESH, AND THE DEVIL

**A**S soon as a baby soul is born a deadly plot is laid against its life. There are always three partners in this fell conspiracy: the World, the Flesh, and the Devil. Tricked up in gorgeous disguises, in the hopes of being mistaken for the three Wise Men of the first Christmas, they come to present their gifts at the baby's cradle.

The World bears a bank-book, with a first deposit for the new-born babe; the Flesh brings a silver spoon; while the Devil smilingly presents a pretty little looking-glass for the darling child. But, unlike the genuine Wise Men, they do not forthwith leave the baby, but

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remain with him till his last day, the World waiting without at the door, the Flesh continually dancing attendance upon him within the house, while the Devil deprecates and insinuates himself, till, at last, he creeps right into the baby's eyes.

In this way the fight begins between the principalities and powers and the soul of a child. For a while the Flesh has full sway, standing with finger at lip at the nursery door lest the baby's slumbers may be disturbed, toiling at midnight over bottles and brews that the baby's appetite may be tempted. The World stands at the door, handing in presents of gorgeous clothes that the baby may feel himself better than other babies; while the Devil contents himself with making his presence within the child evident by vocal exer-

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cises at midnight, in the silence of men's sleep-time.

A few years pass, and the World now stands at the door in the shape of the neighbor's boy, Johnnie, to tempt the little angel soul, forgetful of the lofty lessons which he has learned at his mother's and over his father's knee, to tempt him away to steal cherries or throw stones at the local cat. Within the home the Flesh slyly leaves the pantry door open at all odd moments, with visions of pie and doughnuts within, and his favorite constitutional is straight to the nearest candy store and back. The Devil lies low, knowing his time is coming, and merely suggests the kicking of furniture and a general programme of destructive hatefulness.

In the next scene, only a few years

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later, the World, the Flesh, and the Devil all have left the house, and stand with the group of boys telling stories in the dark corner of the street. The World says, "Don't be queer! Be like other fellows!" The Flesh says, "This is life!" The Devil adds, with a wink, "Don't tell!"

In a year or so the boy leaves home to seek his fortune in the wide, wide world. The Devil has gone before, so as to be able to welcome him when he arrives as a stranger at the great city. The World goes with him to help him to rid himself of his apron-string ways and help him to be a man among men. The Flesh throws the candy and childishness away, and smiles and nods confidentially at the Devil when he comes to meet the party at the great city.

So that evening the boy, in his lodg-

ings, sits down to think. The World sits beside him, and says: "Your father and mother and that home crowd were too narrow and strict. Be a man of the world. Every one lies a little and steals a little, and does a few things on the sly. Don't live in a hole; live in the world!" Then the boy, looking at the World, says to him, "If I go with you, where will you bring me?"

The World lifts the curtain of the future, and the boy sees great office buildings and fine houses and automobiles and honor and the plaudits of the crowd. Then suddenly and nervously the World drops the curtain and looks round at the boy quickly, saying, "That is where I will bring you if you will come with me." And the boy is tempted sorely, for he wants to succeed, and he sits thinking deeply, for it

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is for just such things he has come to the great city — to get on.

As he sits thinking, he thinks he hears his father's voice in his heart; yes, he hears it clearly and distinctly, his father's voice, yet in his own heart, and it says, "Why did the World drop the curtain so nervously and so suddenly?" His father's voice says this over several times — "Why was it dropped so suddenly?" — till the boy, rising up quickly and bending forward before the World can intervene, pulls aside the curtain again and sees what comes after those things which the World has showed him — despair and anguish and shame, and a little pile of dust and ashes.

Then the boy turns to the World and says, "No, I will not go with you whither you would lead me, but I will

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bring you where I am going.” With that he lays hold of the World and seizes him, and the World falls down upon his knees before him, saying, “Master, I will go wheresoever thou dost lead me.”

Next the Flesh comes in and speaks to him in whispers of the glory of the body, of love, of the sweet influence of wine and soft joys of ease after the feast. A drowsy perfume fills the room as he speaks, and soft music and sweet voices are heard, alluring beyond words. He feels himself beginning to slip down and drift away upon the sweetest voyage of the world. Suddenly, somewhere in memory, a door is opened swiftly and closed again. But through it he hears in the moment the voice of his mother, singing. It is different music from that he had thought

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so sweet a moment before; somehow now all the other music seems jarred and jangled and out of tune. A stench as of unwashed bodies innumerable comes up into his nostrils; he draws himself up, and, seizing Flesh by the throat, he points out to him the direction in which the stream is flowing, saying, “See whither thou wast bringing me!” And they both look down and see that the river drains immediately into a stagnant and putrid marsh of loathsome aspect.

“No,” he says to Flesh, “I will not go whither thou wouldest have brought me, but thou must help me along the road whither I am going.” Then Flesh bows his head before him, and he brands Flesh upon the forehead with the mark of life. Hardly has he done so when the Devil appears in the room,

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saying, with a sneer: “Whither art thou going? Dost thou know thyself whither thou art going? The end of the World is dust and ashes, the end of the Flesh is disease and death; thou art going there, anyway; why not go with good companions along, instead of in lonely toil and thankless duty?”

Then the young man sinks down upon his chair dejected, and the tears come into his eyes as he thinks: “How do I know, anyway? Whither am I going? I know not! Alas, I know not!” The Devil smiles, and utters again words of doubt and adds counsels of imperfection. At last he says: “No one knows! Why give up the real for a dream? Come with me; you will then, at least, have to-day, the glorious to-day!”

But the World and the Flesh have

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seen the young man's perilous state as he is tempted of the Devil, and being now faithful servants of the young man they have gone out in search of help for him. Just at the critical moment, when he is about to despair and yield to the Evil One, they return, and the World brings with him a noble friend or two, who rally round the lonely young man, and encourage him and give him strength of soul in his struggle, while the Flesh brings several angels—Rest, Refreshment, Vital Force, and others—who minister unto him.

So, at last, refreshed in body and cheered by companionship, he looks up to have his last fight out with the Devil, but finds the Devil has disappeared and is nowhere to be seen. Then the young man goes out arm in arm with

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the World and the Body, they supporting and helping him, and he leading them on to undreamed heights of happiness and glory.

## TWO KINDS OF CHRISTMAS

### A PAGAN CHRISTMAS

SOME people say that Christmas is just a pagan festival, with a Christian name added to it. They say it is the historic development of the heathen orgies of the Saturnalia, and that it has been kept up in Christendom all through the years with the added name of Christ tacked on to it.

Now if it gives any people any satisfaction so to believe, Scrooge-like, it does us very little harm. Yet it is true that in America to-day there are the two types of people, those who keep Christmas in a pagan manner and those who keep it in a Christian manner. Some people celebrate the Satur-

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nalia. Some people celebrate the birth of Jesus.

The following are the directions for keeping it as a pagan festival: About a week before Christmas think of the people who gave you presents last year and who will probably expect something from you this year. Then declare in their presence a few times that you feel so poor this year that you do not see how you can give any presents at all.

As soon as the department stores are crowded to overflowing, go down to the city and join the rush. Discover that everybody is so selfish in a crowd, and that you "never saw such rude people, the way they push and crowd and try to get served first." Go in the evening if you possibly can and tell the salesgirl what you think of her for her delay in getting you the change of your

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dollar bill after your ninety-eight-cent purchase.

Choose the things that are cheapest. You cannot be expected to know how long the salesgirl has already been upon her feet that week, nor how late the messenger boys have to work delivering parcels at night, nor how much the people could have been paid for making the goods you buy so cheaply. Besides they are presents, and it does not matter so much how they wear; it is not as if they were for yourself.

Work hard in this way for three or four days, making sure to buy for each person something at least as good as that person gave you last year. When you get absolutely sick and tired of this rush, stay at home a morning and take out the store of presents you got last Christmas which were of no use to

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you and which you have kept to give away again this Christmas. It is well to be sure that you do not send the same things back to people who sent them to you.

At the last moment you will remember somebody who will be likely to expect something from you and whom you had almost forgotten. Rush back again to town. Remember always to buy the same things that every one else is buying, the same "Christmas books" like this one, that no one was ever discovered reading, the same little useful bags that will serve as a kind of chain-Christmas-present, exchanging owners annually at Christmas for many years, the same useless nothings that the recipients add to their store of other nothings either to be packed away or to be daily dusted.

So let the pagan festival be ushered in with one half of the country standing desperately weary, ready to drop, working, selling, being rushed and scolded, delivering parcels, and the other half angry and dissatisfied.

On Christmas morning send off any stray last presents you may have, to those who have sent to you and from whom you did not expect anything. They will think that you sent them before you got theirs and that the delay was due to the Christmas rush. Then unparcel all your own presents, exclaim over them, pack them away, sweep up the paper and excelsior and have the first piece of real enjoyment you have had for weeks over a good, substantial Christmas dinner.

## TWO KINDS OF CHRISTMAS

### A CHRISTIAN CHRISTMAS

TAKE a page in your notebook and write above it this sentence, "Love can make a little gift excel." All year long be noting down in it suggestions of things the people you love would like: the toy train for the little son of the woman who washed for you at your summer home; the new graphophone record for the neighbor's boy who is out at the mining camp for the first Christmas.

Mem. "Martha said to-day she would rather have a Persian kitty than anything else in the world!"

Mem. "George was saying this June that he had always been wanting a complete set of Hawthorne, but that somehow he had never gotten round to get it."

## TWO KINDS OF CHRISTMAS

Mem. July 8. "Mrs. Francis said, 'I think that picture of Jesus and the Fishermen is the loveliest of all.'"

Mem. Aug. 10. "Jane said that the rocker in Mrs. J.'s parlor was the only chair she ever sat in that *exactly* suited her," etc., etc.

All year long be adding to your ideas, be planning for other people's surprises. Then when Christmas comes you will not need to buy a single conventional, trade - Christmas - present. They will all be personal tokens of thought. They will all have been bought long before the rush begins. You will have bought some things in small local stores for the good of trade, you will have asked for the Consumers' League Label for the good of the work-people, you will have shopped in November for the good of the sales-

## TWO KINDS OF CHRISTMAS

people. Before the first week in December they will be all ready except those upon which you are working yourself. Then you have a great time between that and Christmas planning all kinds of jokes and surprises.

A millionaire may have dwarf gooseberry trees supplied by contract at ten dollars apiece from England at every plate on his Christmas table, but the joke is not half so good as — well, what Harry found in his Christmas pie last Christmas, which hit his case so well, and showed him some one else remembered his little success, and which has added a permanent new word to the private vocabulary of the family ever since.

At this time, too, you begin writing letters. One to the author of the book you have so much enjoyed this fall,

## TWO KINDS OF CHRISTMAS

asking him not to feel it necessary to reply, but telling him all the good it did you; one to the invalid who thinks herself of no use in the world, telling her how much she means to you; one perhaps to your doctor or minister or your telephone girl, in return for kindness, thought, courtesy, inspiration during the year.

On Christmas morning you have time to have a Christmas party for the birds. You are dumbfounded at the number of people who have remembered you. You begin that very evening to write and tell them so. And your Christmas dinner is the least of all the joys of your happiest Christmas.

It is not a matter of cost; it is a matter of love and thought and planning. Too late for this Christmas, is it? Ah, but just in time for next.

## OUR HEREDITARY SCARE

ONE of the first stories we tell our children from the Bible is the account of how a severe shower of rain was fatal to a great company of people. We tell them that only a very few people of that district, with some zoölogical specimens, escaped with their lives in an ark from the rain. This story has been told to children for generations in Sunday-Schools and in the homes upon Sunday afternoons. The result is that in the minds of practically all Christian people there is a hereditary scare. Religion and the danger of rain have become so subtly connected in their minds that strong men have been known to refuse to go to church upon a wet Sunday.

## OUR HEREDITARY SCARE

Rain under other circumstances has practically no terrors for the modern man or woman. But once you couple rain with the idea of Sunday or church or religion, that subtle psychological connection takes place in their minds. They hardly know why they are scared, but they are scared. It is the unconscious memory of their early Bible stories which is at work.

Now we can hardly afford to give up Noah. This ought to be made plain at the very start. Yet matters are critical. Cases are common where the appearance of a cloud upon Sunday morning has induced a family seizure and emptied an entire pew. My suggestion is that a petition signed by representatives of all the churches be sent to the President calling for a federal commission of scientists to analyze speci-

## OUR HEREDITARY SCARE

mens of “religious rain” (that is, rain which falls at or before church services). This analysis will, in all probability, result in a report that rain upon Sundays and church service nights is of precisely the same chemical constitution as upon theater and concert nights. This report will help to dispel this popular misconception.

We ought also to insert in our Sunday-School hymn-books some hymns upon Sunday rain which would be taught concurrently with the flood story and so help also to allay the unconscious dread caused by this tale. We cannot afford to give up Noah, as we have said. The loss of his ark would be a calamity to toymakers and the loss of his terrible example would be irreparable to the W.C.T.U. But such a hymn as this sung upon the same

## OUR HEREDITARY SCARE

Sunday upon which the flood story is told would neutralize any harmful effect as well as inculcate some of the principles of true “science”:

Sunday rain is good for me,  
    Makes me grow, you bet,  
If I keep from out my mind  
    The idea of wet.

The juxtaposition of this song with the first knowledge of the flood story will, I believe, entirely destroy the vicious psychological connection between religion and rain which we have noted above.

If these proposals meet with approval and are followed, wet Sundays will soon be red-letter days in all our churches, and the point will be taken from the old gibe that the Baptists are the only Christian church which have not been afraid of water.

## LITERATURE AND DEMOCRACY

I DO not know how to define true democracy. Looking at it from one point of view we can say that the democratic consciousness is that state of mind which takes delight in and has confidence in people rather than things.

As for literature, I am inclined to borrow as my definition of it Shelley's definition of poetry as being "the record of the best and happiest moments of the best and happiest minds."

It is a pity that as far as I know there is no thoroughly accepted word in the English language to express the opposite of democracy. Probably the best word is one which, in spite of Thackeray's use of it in the title of a book of

real literature, has never fully won recognition for itself — the word “snob.”

Now the thesis I should like to present is that the lover of true literature can never be a snob, or rather that his snobbishness must decrease in proportion to his understanding love of real literature.

Snobbishness is a disease of the spiritual eyesight which magnifies altogether out of proportion the insignificant qualities which separate people, and fails to see the great and beautiful qualities in which, with the infinite variety which gives literature its chance, all are kin. For the snob, accent of speech, quality of clothing, deftness to choose the right spoon for the soup, ability of avoiding in conversation any subject too far from the weather, and, above all, the art of smiling in a deep,

soulful, and understanding manner when the proper time comes to approve of the symphony or opera or lecture of which Boston approves — these powers seem to the snob to be of infinite value, but the qualities that made T Wharf, when the fish smells high, or an auction of old clothes in a street off Bowdoin Square, or Shakespeare, universal in their human quality, are lost upon them.

What literature wants to show forth is the unity that underlies the infinite variety of human nature. So it is interested in all sorts and conditions of men, women, and children. But it will admit exclusive superiority to none.

The aristocrat comes to literature and tries to persuade her that the man of birth and breeding is the only truly interesting and noble character. Chau-

cer answered that demand in his great manner and for all time in the Prologue to his "Canterbury Tales." You remember after the most carefully painted and exquisite of his vignettes in that poem, that of the parish priest, he adds this:

"With him ther was a Plowman, was his brother,  
That had ylad of dong ful many a fother."

And I think that English poetry ever since has been on the whole true to that grand manner of Master Chaucer; it matters not whether a man is dealing with the sacred mysteries, or high up in the counsel of emperors and courts, or loading up dung in a cart; it is his humanity that is interesting literature.

So morality has always come to literature and tried to persuade her that

it is only the people morality thought good who were worthy of literary setting; the others should only be used sparingly as awful warning. But literature has answered that demand with Goethe, Montaigne, Nietzsche, and Ibsen, and with the general retort that those whom we think immoral are often a great deal more moral than ourselves. Scientists have asserted to literature that insanity, for instance, in any of its forms was morbid and only to be hushed up; literature has responded with Don Quixote, Ophelia, and the fools of Shakespeare, the mad song of Gretchen, Madge Wildfire, and Meg Merrilies, and altogether with the pertinent retort that those whom we think mad are often a great deal more acute than we are.

So various coteries of snobs have

come to literature and asserted that the people of their kind were too sacred to be laughed at. Royalists said you must n't laugh at kings and the splendor and sacred majesty of courts and princes; literature made answer with Gulliver's "Travels" and "Sartor Resartus," and Shelley and Swinburne.

Clericals said you must n't laugh at the Church; literature responded with Jane Austen's curates, and the Reverend Mr. Chadbond. Prudes said you must n't laugh at our morality and ideals of common decency; literature responded by inventing George Bernard Shaw.

In fact the idea of literature is that everything that is human is worth study; that in the mire and scum of things something always, always sings; that nothing worth while ought to be

afraid of being laughed at; and that the thing that everybody is interested in is human nature. So that real literature is always the expression of democracy, and the boy and girl who love poetry and imaginative literature must also be essentially democratic and come to like the people around them from whose lives this poetry and imaginative work has been distilled.

As a general rule English literature has been true to this democratic ideal, though of course some failures from that aim are to be discovered. Such is, for instance, that frightfully snobbish poem of Tennyson's, "Lady Clara Vere de Vere." We are to assume, I suppose, that this lady had offended the youthful poet by not attending enough to him. But this can hardly justify two of the most impudent lines

of English poetry, when the youthful bard actually gives this gratuitous advice to the fair lady:

“Oh! teach the orphan-boy to read,  
Or teach the orphan-girl to sew —”

But English poetry has seldom fallen so low.

The antiseptic power of literature was forcibly brought home to me a short time ago by a young man who was complaining about the exclusive and aristocratic spirit shown by his young wife. He said at last with tears in his eyes, “Yet I have no one but myself to blame; I ought to have known it all the time before I was married — *she never liked Falstaff.*”

Different people have their own different summer resorts that they praise above any others. I too have mine from which one comes back always

with a greater love for one's fellow-men and I hope more democratic of soul. It is Keats's little town, by river or seashore or mountain, built with peaceful citadel, that was emptied of its folk that pious morn when Keats in the British Museum caught sight of the Greek urn. It is the same little city so well described by Yeats:

“Where nobody gets old and crafty and wise,  
Where nobody gets old and godly and grave,  
Where nobody gets old and bitter of tongue,  
And where kind tongues bring no captivity,  
For we are only true to the far lights  
We follow singing over valley and hill.”

As we wind upward toward that temple we follow that mysterious priest — I sometimes think he is Chaucer's “povre persoun” of a town, sometimes I think he is old Dr. Lavendar. Above our heads is ever the eternal music of Shelley's skylark singing; and

entering the temple we hear with enraptured ears Abt Vogler extemporizing upon an instrument of his invention. So we take our places with Sir Roger de Coverley and Colonel Newcome; we see the weather-scarred, tear-stained face of the Ancient Mariner who kneels with outstretched hands before the central altar; and in the farther transept yonder the gold sunshine falling upon Lady Esmond's head. As I look around that little temple (going there as I do after the hard winter's work, summer after summer) I will confess to you in confidence, on condition that it goes no further, those whom I see most gladly. I confess I am most in love with Thackeray's Beatrix, although if it comes to marriage I should choose for my wife (I fear it is hopelessly sentimental) Esther in

“Bleak House,” or *Candida*, and for my sister Jeannie Deans, and if Heaven ever blessed me with a daughter I should choose *Cordelia*, and for my mother I have long ago taken her of whom John Donne wrote those wondrous lines:

“Nor Spring nor Summer beauty hath such grace  
As I have seen in one autumnal face.”

And when the long procession of holy fathers two and two, so well described by Scott in the “Lay of the Last Minstrel,” has passed along the aisle, my eye strays away through the window down to the little town lying below, where we sometimes upon the city common are called to battle by the splendid imagery of Milton’s devil or the glorious power of Bunyan’s Apollyon, for there are no other two

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generals in the city of literature under whom one would more gladly fight. And at last I see the little Mermaid Tavern in one of the streets where, when the service is over, we shall go and listen to Johnson or talk to R. L. S., and where I promise you I shall get drunk in nobody's company but Falstaff's only.

## THE GREAT JOY OF GETTING HOME AGAIN

**A**BOUT the middle of August we all begin to feel we need a change. The rustic cabin chairs of birchwood, that looked so charmingly mountainy in the beginning of July, begin now to hurt the back and become uncomfortable; and we remember, with longing, that deep, soft Morris chair in our living-room at home. The music of the sad sea waves or of the wind among the pine trees sounds more and more monotonous to us as we hear with spiritual ears the roar of Washington Street traffic or of Broadway, or even the less human sounds of the Friday afternoon Symphony. Most of all, as we long to get back to town, it is the

## THE JOY OF GETTING HOME AGAIN

vision of fresh vegetables and eggs and butter that attracts us. There is an old superstition to the effect that the country is the source of these good things; that the hen and the cow and the soil are connected in some obscure way with all these delights. Experience has proved to city folks how false this idea has been. The source of eggs, butter, and fresh vegetables is Chicago; and, the nearer we get to that center or to some other such metropolis, the better they will be. Up in New Hampshire we have smiled as our friends at our piazza luncheon have praised these delicacies of the country, exclaiming over them as triumphs of rural life, knowing, as we did, that these had all come up on the same train as they, from Boston. Our friends at Gloucester have been writing us in transports of

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delight over the fresh fish they are getting now from an address we gave them of a most reliable Chicago firm. Soon, we dream in the middle of August, we shall be back with our own reliable city milk that has no barn or cabbage or turnip in it. Soon we shall be able to buy eggs that have not been cooked by the long journey from the city in the heat of the day up to the jumping-off place, which is our summer home. We have been searching for eggs all day up here in New Hampshire, and have been met with the blankest faces at farmhouse after farmhouse. “Could you tell us where we could get some fresh eggs?” we asked. Invariably we have been met with astonishment. We were by that very question judged as city folk who thought they could get anything they wanted anywhere. “No,

## THE JOY OF GETTING HOME AGAIN

I could not say where you might be getting ‘eggs,’ ” was the answer regularly. We saw hens at one farmhouse, but found they were kept as pets only.

It is because we really are “city folk,” and need asphalt and electric arc-lamps and dust and eggs and such city comforts, that we all fly back about this time of the year. We like to play we are a part of nature, but you have only to see Mrs. Smith when to-day she thought that a grasshopper was up her skirt, you have only to see the piazza luncheon party when a dead beetle is found at the bottom of the teacup, to be convinced we are only playing at being nature folk: we really are fit only to walk about on concrete, rubbered, umbrellaed, and waterproofed, with a policeman around to

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keep us from being run over at crossings. We are parasites of steam heat and concrete and cushions. We have no kinship with the real farmers, who view with astonishment our desire for eggs in August. We are all second cousins to the New York lady who viewed through her lorgnette for a few moments Millet's picture of "The Sower," and then said to her companion, "I do not care for pictures of persons of that class." We are not of that class. Mosquitoes sting us, fertilizer smells to us, slivers get into our hands, and we wake up about eight o'clock in the morning.

No, let us return to our superheated, ill-ventilated houses in our hordes, let us talk about Strauss and the Cubists at our afternoon teas, while the farmers of New England, glad to be rid of the intruders, sit down on their piazzas to

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enjoy the best time of all the year — October. They do not rave about fresh eggs or garden vegetables, but are hungry enough to eat what comes their way because they have never known the tastes of the town. They do not spy at the birds through ridiculous glasses and look up their names in books, or walk hot and weary miles to see views, or lose golf-balls in the long grasses of the meadows. They work at their little farms and make what they can. They do not know the names of the flowers or the birds or the mountain-peaks, but they know them. They do not go out to see sunsets, but the calm of the sunset, as they see it with the corner of their eyes, fills their souls; and their children after them will remember the lane at the back of the house that leads to the pasture, long after some rich

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man has bought it and leveled it, and employed two men, with lawn-mowers, upon it weekly during the summer months.

## WHAT I WOULD NOT THAT I DO

THE dogs met one day to reconsider their historic attitude toward cats.

The old dog, who was chairman of the meeting, rose and said that he was sure they had all come to feel that their attitude toward cats was the one great blemish upon their noble racial characteristics. It was both cruel and undignified so to harry and persecute the most insignificant and helpless of creatures. He was sure that he expressed the mind of the meeting when he said that this custom should be entirely done away with. The chairman's speech was greeted with great applause. Dog after dog arose and spoke

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along similar lines. The feeling was absolutely unanimous that this barbarous custom of pursuing cats must be entirely given up. At last one dignified animal rose and said that this moment was a great one in the history of their race and he thought that the conclusion to which they had come should be made permanent in some solemn form. He proposed that every one should stand up and solemnly raising the right paw, pledge himself never to pursue a cat again. This was unanimously agreed to.

As they were thus standing, a cat in a near-by tree thought it an opportune moment to descend and return home. Unfortunately, in jumping from the tree, she made a slight noise upon the fallen leaves. The chairman of the meeting, who was standing with his

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paw raised putting the vote, caught sight of her, and in a moment there was not a dog to be seen in the place and the cat had the narrowest escape of her life.

## LIES

**I** LIKE to nail them on the counter as the old storekeepers used to nail false coin down as a warning to all comers. They are blue lies, and they sometimes deceive even the elect.

The first is this: *Every one is in it for what he can get out of it.* I have often thought it. You have often almost said it. Most cheerfully I hereby publicly proclaim it a lie.

As I travel by night in one of those vehicles, called for some unknown reason a “sleeper,” I sometimes vary the monotony by pulling up the shade and looking out. I see lights, and every light is the witness to me of some one who is not in it only for what he can get out of it. There is no known method

of supervising men who are in it only for what they can get out of it. I see the red and white and green lights along the track, and each means some absolutely unsupervisible soul awake at the post of duty guarding the lives of his fellows. In a flash I pass the fire-station in a town by the tracks, and the light there is the light of souls ready at any time to give up their lives for the pride they have in the fact that no fireman ever fails in his duty. I pass the lights of a great hospital upon the hill, and know the nurses and doctors there are inspired by no hope of large profits from their profession, but for the pride that they have been worthy members of a brotherhood and sisterhood loyal to the duty of heart and skill. When as the gray morning dawns I begin to see laborers and humble men of business

hurrying toward their daily work, I am glad that the thing most of them think of most is not the gain but the glory, the satisfaction of doing a day's work accurately and conscientiously and well. The truth is: Nearly every one is in it for his loyalty to duty.

The second lie is this: *You have to give the public what it wants.* The public does not want literature, it wants best-sellers; it does not want worship, it wants vaudeville; it does not want to think, it wants to have its prejudices tickled; it does not want to feel, it wants to be made a fool of; it does not want inspiration, it wants flattery. You must give the public what it wants.

I am glad to say it is a lie. If you do give the public what it wants, the public ends by despising you; but if you give the public your best, the public

ends by trying to worship you. The architect who gave the public of twenty years ago what it wanted is trying now with all his might to be reborn as a yeggman with a stick of dynamite, that he may remove from the earth some traces of his shame.

But, thanks be to God, there are ten thousand preachers and architects and painters and writers who refuse to give the public what it wants. There are stained-glass makers who are not millionaires and yet refuse thousands offered them for making oiled illustrations instead of stained-glass windows. There is at least one architect who will not design for you a building he knows to be wrong. There are some writers who will not descend to slobber and slush, though they could make money by the slide-down. The result is per-

haps that they are white-haired and have been poor. But what of it? They are the salt of the earth who have learned the secret truth: The public demands of you your best.

The third lie is this: *You must defend God against the truth.* God, morality, and religion all exist because we want to believe in them. That is as far as it is “reverent” to go. To present a microscope or a telescope or spectroscope at God is disbelief. It is pious to believe as we believe and very wicked to try and throw the light of reason around that belief. Believe, but never ask why. The Devil’s name is “Why?” Simply believe.

It is a great relief to know that all this is a lie. It all amounts to this: If I begin to think and investigate, it may prove not to be so, therefore I

shall consider it wrong to do so. Suppose investigations proved that the text on which my hope for eternal salvation rests was a mistranslation, where would I be? Supposing scientific experiment proved conclusively that there is no life hereafter, what would become of our hymn-books? Supposing life can be produced in our laboratories, what would happen to poor God? Therefore, all search for truth in regions where the present views are necessary to our comfort is taboo, irreverent, irreligious, rationalistic, godless.

But eternal glory be to the man of scientific mind which follows truth even if it damn him. That is what they called in the Middle Ages the unmercenary love of God. As W. L. Sperry has recently pointed out, the old queer

question of those saints of the Middle Ages, “Could I love God even if he damned me?” is a very real and very modern question to-day. The scientific mind answers it triumphantly with a “Yes.” Whether these investigations destroy my most cherished hopes or not, I will follow them out. I will follow nothing but the truth. The phrase used by an ancient Greek thinker in a controversial work on philosophy, “The following considerations will be of value to my opponents,” as he listed the difficulties he had met in supporting his own hypothesis, that phrase is the essence of the scientific spirit, which is also the spirit of all true religion:—loyalty to the truth. The greatest reverence we can show to God in such matters is to let him look after himself.

The Devil says, “Does Job serve

## LIES

God for naught?" The answer is in the affirmative. Job at his post of duty, Job at his lonely easel, Job at his microscope, serves God for naught but the joy of serving him.

If all this seems too optimistic to you, if you feel that there are too many clock-watchers, shirkers, mere time-servers among the world's workers and artists and scientists to-day, remember the only way you can improve matters is not by scolding about it, but by being the other kind yourself.

## THE BEST JOKE

WHAT is the best joke you ever heard? Well, you know you cannot retell jokes. Jokes have to happen. Then they are funny. But when you go to work to tell some one else about them, they seem to lose their comic flavor. I remember hearing a girl say that the funniest thing she ever saw was when her kitty ran off with the baby's doll and the baby ran after it. Now, between ourselves, there does not seem to us to be anything particularly funny about that. But, if we had been there when it happened, we should have laughed as loudly as any one.

Foreigners tell us that one of the things which spoil spontaneous American humor is the habit of swapping

## THE BEST JOKE

stories. It is hard to invent and make a good, new, real joke, and "stories" grow stale so soon. But the new joke that comes fresh out of a person's life is always the best joke.

It is the easiest thing in the world to make people laugh with their mouths. The person who can do it best is a fool. It is the hardest thing imaginable to make people laugh with their minds and souls as well as with their mouths. It takes a genius to do that. People as a general rule laugh at anything that is incongruous. I heard a whole audience of people at a stereopticon lecture laughing at a fly which was walking over one of the slides and so appearing on the screen. That was not the place they expected to see a fly, and so they laughed.

When the funny man came up to the

## THE BEST JOKE

gate of heaven, he found the gate was not opened as quickly as he expected. So he began to tell of all the good jokes he had made on earth, and of all the times he had made people laugh. Peter listened to all he had to say. Then he said:

“Funny men are admitted to heaven only on account of the good jokes they thought of and did not tell.”

“What do you mean?” said the funny man, looking up earnestly for once in his life.

“You have been an after-dinner speaker,” said Peter sternly. “You have committed the unpardonable sin of irrelevance. You have dragged in the dead bodies of jokes, and as a body-snatcher you are condemned. Furthermore you have economized and stinted in the sacred free spirit of humor, mak-

## THE BEST JOKE

ing notes of second-hand jokes, and squeezing out of the garbage of your mind foul and bitter drops that have shocked the unthinking into sneaking laughter. But it would spoil the real fun of heaven to let you in." So the funny man turned away with a sigh to tell his stories elsewhere.

But what is the best joke that has ever been made? The answer is a matter of nationality. The Scotchman's best joke is canny, while the Irishman's rushes like a bull through both language and logic with twinkling solemnity. England enjoys an assumed callousness most of all. German jokes are rough; French, risqué. America loves the laconic dry jest of few words mostly implied.

The typical American story is that of the farmer in the God-forsaken coun-

## THE BEST JOKE

try-side who was asked by a visitor if he had lived there all his life, and answered: "Not yit!" The typical Irish story is of the Irishman who refused to let the dentist put his hand in his mouth to fix his tooth, he said he was afraid the dentist would bite him. The typical Scotch story is of the Scotchman who had after going all round the railroad carriage in a vain search for a loan of a match, "jist had to use one of his ain." The typical English story is of the resourceful friend who seeing at a fire a poor man caught on the topmost beam far above the highest ladder, threw him up a rope, told him to tie it round him and — pulled him down.

But what is the best joke that has ever been made? It is the fact that every one thinks his own the best. "Ma, may I have some more 'am?"

## THE BEST JOKE

says the little cockney girl. "Don't say 'am, my dear; say 'am," says the mother. And the father, standing by, winks at the visitor and says, "They both think they're saying 'am.'" And of course the visitor thinks he says "ham," and you do and I do. But who knows if we do? Perhaps we are both saying "'am." We think our own jokes best. Perhaps that is the best joke of all.

## THIS IS AS FAR AS YOU GO

ONCE there was a very fatherly and motherly locomotive. It used to bring a train of suburbanites into the city every morning. It took such a personal interest in everybody whom it picked up on the way that it worried greatly when the time came for them to get out. It used to fret and fume and wonder why it could not see each of its dear passengers safe to his office or his business. These children might get run over on the street outside the station, these stranger ladies would be sure to lose their way, these men might miss the electrics and be late for work.

So whenever the poor thing was brought to a stop in the South Station

## THIS IS AS FAR AS YOU GO

it used to wear itself all out bumping against the buffer, wishing it could see each one of its passengers safe to his or her destination. It knew that they would never be able to look out for themselves. It had taken such care to bring them so far, why could n't it get off the rails and see them all safe to their journey's end?

One morning, as the locomotive was grunting and growling and puffing off steam in this nervous condition of affectionate worry, the station-master came up to it and said: "Look here, old fellow, you have done very well bringing all these passengers safely so far on their way, **BUT THIS IS AS FAR AS YOU GO!"**

## IN PRAISE OF EVE

EVE is one of the most pathetic figures in history. I cannot help feeling that her sad plight is largely due to a misunderstanding. She has been held guilty of bringing the knowledge of evil into the human race. But that is due to a misunderstanding of the Hebrew phrase, "To know good and evil," which simply is the equivalent of our slang phrase, "To know what's what," to have the intelligence of a mature man. Few notice in reading the story that the prophecies of the serpent come true, God's do not. Most people have the idea that our first parents were put out of the garden because of Eve's disobedience, but the story itself states they were excluded because

they had become intelligent through Eve's action, and might now hoodwink their jailer further into eating of the tree of eternal life. The serpent is emblematic of the spirit which throws out suggestions that put responsibility on others, and give them trouble, and then glides safely away and ironically takes no part itself.

The moral of the tale, then, is that the impulse to know, the impulse which creates science and civilization, is indulged at a great cost. The tale tells how mankind left a condition of slothful ease for a life of painful struggle. Every progress in intelligence brings with it greater possibilities of suffering. The more highly developed a man or woman is in mind and heart, the more susceptible he or she has become to pain. Every new and original

step in the progress of the race is made in defiance of some old and honored law or custom, is made at the risk of failure and loss of some fair Eden, and brings with it somewhere greater possibilities of pain. Eve is the adventurous soul of the world which, in defiance of use and wont, sets out to blaze a new trail in the pathless forests which is one day to become the highway of the nations. Eve is the great high priestess of all who have dared to know, to follow truth at all costs, to investigate and understand. Eve declared man is fit for better things than keeping a garden: it is his to enjoy more than the cow-like pleasures of sleep in the garden shadows in the heat of the day. Better to suffer, better to agonize and struggle and fail, than to live forever this silly life of inglorious ease. So Eve led our

race forth, and the gates of Eden clanged behind her forever. Behind her were the cool walks, the pleasant shadows, the blooming flowers, the healthy work, the light and easy sleep of the garden, and before her — Ah, if she had seen what lay before the race she was leading forth, would she ever have taken that hasty step? Had she seen the battlefields, the treachery, the suffering, the poverty, the sin and slums and corruption of our modern close-built cities, would she not have been content to have stayed among the dreaming shadows tending her flowers?

We can answer surely, No! To know, to do, to achieve, to take great risks for the chances of great and noble victories, this is life, she would have cried, rather than a thousand years of ease. We know she would have answered

## IN PRAISE OF EVE

thus, for we are all the children of Eve, and the voice of her adventurous soul is in our souls to-day. If it is a choice between ignorant happiness and painful acquisition of new knowledge, we cast away to-day happiness and health and ease to know more, to know the truth. All honor to our common mother, then; and may our God, who is not the arbitrary and revengeful deity whom Eve outwitted, but a God of truth, of progress, demanding of all his children courage and intelligence, may he give us some of the power of individual choice which is ours by hereditary right from Eve our mother!

## THE GRAMMAR OF LIFE

THE parts of speech once met together to discuss which was the greatest. The first personal pronoun was appointed judge. The nouns, sitting on their thrones — solid, substantial, vast — asserted: “We are the only things; everything else is mere idea; we are the only reality; we are the greatest.”

The adjectives laughed at this, and cried in scorn: “Nay, what are the nouns without us? A noun without shape or color or size is ridiculous; we give quality to reality; we are the greatest.”

At which the verbs rushed in, in great haste, followed by their attendants, shouting as they ran around:

## THE GRAMMAR OF LIFE

“We do things. Nouns are dead. The great thing in life is to act. Therefore we are the greatest.” Their little fairy attendants, who guided all their actions, and kept the strenuous, undisciplined verbs from all kinds of confusion and violence, merely smiled at this and said nothing, for the interjections were asserting that they were the only parts of speech that could talk, and the prepositions and conjunctions (in uniform like little messenger boys) were chattering away to the effect that they were essential to all business arrangements and therefore were the greatest.

After waiting for the confusion to subside, the first personal pronoun said: “The greatest thing in life is not to have things, nor even to have good things. It is not to do things, much less to talk or diplomatically to arrange

## THE GRAMMAR OF LIFE

things. The thing of most importance in life is *the way* you do things. I therefore call upon the little attendants I see with the verbs — the adverbs — to receive the prize. God must be served by adverbs."

Then the adverbs came up to be crowned as the most important parts of speech. The rest of the company at first was inclined to be angry, but could not remain so long, for the adverbs came up and took the prize in such a pleasant way, and acted so nicely about it afterwards.

## THREE FAMILIAR DEVILS

THE Devil has been portrayed in many ways in the literature of the world. He has the power of appearing in that form best able to tempt the particular weakness of the day and generation.

There are three great pictures of him in three great books, in each of which he appears in a rôle very familiar to us all.

The first book is Milton's "Paradise Lost." Satan is perhaps the real hero of this poem.

The battle-cry of this devil is, "Goodness is weakness; badness is strength!" He urges you to enjoy life untrammeled by the prudential maxims and the cowardly conscience of the

### THREE FAMILIAR DEVILS

unco' godly man. The good people are the weaklings, he tells you: virtue is stale, self-conceited, and ignorant. We only are the brave people who take the risks and live for the glorious to-day.

This is the devil who tempts in youth. Then for a time goodness and all the conventionalities of society and the stale and uninteresting things of life seem to be upon the one side, and the bad and exciting and romantic and interesting things upon the other. This devil is always most powerful where young people are taught that goodness is the preparation to be ready for heaven after death.

When children are taught that their type of goodness is to be the same as grandmother's, and that they are to imitate especially her ways of quiet,

### THREE FAMILIAR DEVILS

humble meditation, then this devil is strong, for he has youthful nature all on his side. But where teachers have made the children feel that to be good is to live the broadest and strongest and most fully rounded human life, then this devil loses much of his power. Here lies our great educational problem — How to make the good life appear to the children the most exciting and interesting and romantic life they can possibly imagine.

Yet this devil will always retain some of his ancient power, and badness will always be able to seem the more glorious to the young because its brag-gadocio is so like manliness, and its excitement so like exaltation, and its thoughtlessness so like the careless generosity of true manhood.

This is the first devil, the great angel

### THREE FAMILIAR DEVILS

of darkness, glorious in his seeming majesty of rebellion, pouring out his scorn upon the safe and tame and easy ways of virtue.

The second devil is the devil of Christ's temptation. This devil does not at all deny that goodness is a grand thing: he believes in it with all his heart. He has come merely to explain to you that this thing which you had considered wrong is in reality quite right: it is in fact your plain duty to do it. He has his divinity-circuit Bible under his arm, from which he quotes copiously to you to prove that the thing which you want to do more than anything else, but which you know quite well is wrong for you to do, is really right for you to do. He merely wishes to help you see your duty more plainly. We all know what a fair face

he can put upon every moral issue. He is filled with kindly thoughts, with tender sentiments. He is an expert in the ignoble side of virtue. He comes to the lazy student and tells him he must not overwork and overtask his strength. He comes to the miserly man and advises him of his duty to provide adequately for his own old age, and speaks feelingly of the sin of becoming a burden upon others. He whispers to the lustful man that self-control is unnatural and bad for him. He is the kindest, most indulgent, most thoughtful friend a man can have. He knows the pardonable, the frail human side of every sin. Yet he is the devil, and the meanest, most degraded man in the world, when he comes to himself after yielding to his suggestions, know she is the devil, and despises and hates him. This

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is the second devil who comes to prove the worse the better reason.

The third devil is in some ways the most devilish of all. He is the devil made immortal by Goethe in his "Faust." He is the smiling gentleman, cultured, keen of intellect, polished in his manners, well traveled and well read, and a trifle sarcastic. He is a man of the world. The idea of any one being really innocent makes him shrug his shoulders and smile in a good-humored way. He simply disbelieves in goodness. He smiles at your ignorance of the world in believing that any one is acting from disinterested motives. Every man has his price, he says: the only kind of innocence that exists is ignorance. He is best described as being pure intellect without appreciation. He cannot love or become enthusiastic or

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praise: he can see only the weak points. This is the devil who tempts us all in times of depression. Every one is looking after his own selfish interests, look out for yourself, too: every one is indulging his worser self upon the sly, take your part and get your share. All men are knaves: to get on, you must be one, too.

These are the three great devils. The first cries defiantly, Right is weak, is miserable. The second advances logically the proposition, Wrong is right if you will only think it over with me. The third, with a sly smile, whispers, There is no right.

## A TRIP AROUND MY SOUL

**I** AM nothing but the head resident in the home in which my ancestors happen to be living at the present time. I sometimes stroll into my soul to visit them. In the center I find a noble band drawn up ready for the day's work. I should like to describe them to you, but while they are interesting to me, I find there is no subject such a bore to any one else. I cannot help, however, pointing out to you the old crusader in his armor, the Puritan martyr, the Pilgrim adventurer, and the solid phalanx of noble knights and squires, honest yeomen and laborers. There they stand, and their eyes flash back at me as though to say: "Here

## A TRIP AROUND MY SOUL

we are, Master! Command us whither you will!"

Looking at them I see in them all the reason for myself. Hair, eyes, brow, figure, I can trace in them the history of myself from the beginning, and as I stand there I understand that I am not an individual so much as a battalion.

These stand in the central campus of my soul. But soon my eyes begin to roam around the darker corners. I see there more ancestors who have not fallen into line. Lurking in the shadows around the edges I begin to discern them all. The lazy ones leaning up against the walls looking idly on; the lustful ones with horrid leer and bestial eyes; the snobbish ones with upturned noses in a group apart; I see to my astonishment the savage with paint and hatred on his face; and far away in the

## A TRIP AROUND MY SOUL

shadows at the back I seem to see one hanging by his tail to the trees of the forest.

Then my work begins. I pass round the dark corners of my soul and bring these recreants forth and whip them into line. The lazy ones I haul forth by the back of the neck, squealing and whining, and I have been even known to go so far as Saint Paul and kick them into their places in the line. The lustful ones I set to the hardest and most strenuous task and lynxlike watch them at it. The snobs I stand and jeer and laugh at till for very shame they have to join the ranks. The savage I fight and conquer, though often blood is drawn before the victory is mine.

At last with every ancestor at my back I give the order, Forward, march!

## A TRIP AROUND MY SOUL

and we start off together for the day's work, every man in the ranks and the very monkey behind dragging a load.

## LIFE 'S A JEST

STRANGE as it may seem, it was an old Scotch elder who said, "The want of a sense of humor is the unpardonable sin." It is true that its absence is almost a sin, for a man's attitude toward life is not wholesome if he be without it. And the humorless state is so hopeless as to be almost unpardonable, the proverbial surgical operation for the purpose of introducing a joke into a hard head not yet having been invented. It is an unpardonable sin, for life in some of its aspects is a jest, and the only righteous and rational attitude of human beings toward life in many of its manifestations is deep, hearty laughter. The sense of humor at its best is one of the deepest things in

life. It is a spiritual perception of the vast, incongruous discrepancy which exists between things as they seem and things as they really are. It is not, then, as is so generally supposed, one of the superficial elements of life. It is part of all that is healthiest and noblest in humanity.

The plan of life and the infinitely subtle adjustments of nature teach us of the intellectual power of the divine mind; we can infer from the beauty of the world that God loves beautiful things; so from the humorous vein which runs through real life we must read back to a deep sense of humor in the divine mind. "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh." There is a spark of omniscience in all real laughter. Most of our humorous appreciation springs from our delighted com-

parison between the two sides of a thing, the apparent and the inner. We are delighted that we have got the inside view, and the thought of the deceptive appearance of the outside makes us chuckle with an omniscient feeling of superiority. A truly omniscient view of the world, the absolute comparison between its outer appearance and its inner reality, cannot fail to be a tender and sympathetic view and yet also deeply humorous. The career, for instance, of a seemingly successful rogue must be very humorous when viewed in its completeness by the omniscient eye, as it is seen clearly how, in spite of all his self-confidence, his tricks and subterfuges, he is inevitably working out, step by step, his own disclosure and ruin. Sin is not only sad, it is ridiculous when seen by wisdom

## LIFE'S A JEST

in its true light. There is subject for laughter as well as for tears in the complete view of the life of any man of whom it cannot be said, "Whatever record leap to light, he never will be shamed!" There is eternal irony in the fruitless attempt to establish a kingdom of darkness in God's world of light.

This is true in Shakespeare's view of life, for his mind partakes more of omniscience in his knowledge of human character than that of any other of modern times. With Shakespeare we can laugh at the worst rogues, and feel that we do right to laugh, because he makes us laugh not merely at their wit, but oftentimes at the essential ridiculousness of sin in itself. He makes us do this with full sympathy for all that is left wholesome in the sinner, such

as his lively fancy and inventiveness. Yet under all that, our chief delight springs from our appreciation of the comic irony in the contrast between the serious, sinful intention of the rascal and the way in which he is actually ultimately defeating his own end.

Unfortunately Christ's reporters had not much of this virtue, and have transmitted to us merely stray glimpses of the humor of their Master. Traces of a gentle irony, however, run all through the Gospel narratives, often hardly appreciated by the writer or the reader. "Beautifully" (*καλῶς*), Christ says in Mark 7: 9, "do ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your tradition." And there is quiet humor in the way in which the phrase "with persecutions" is inserted at the end of the list of the "houses,

and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands," which those who followed him would receive now in this time.

That a genuine humorous appreciation of the intrinsic ridiculousness of the sin does not necessarily detract from one's moral detestation of it is shown in the humorous description Jesus gives of the manner in which the "hypocrites" go forth to do an act of charity, "sounding a trumpet before them in the synagogues and in the streets." "Verily I say unto you," adds Jesus three times as he thinks of their easy success in gaining the publicity they desired — "Verily I say unto you, They have their reward." Such gleams of the humor of Jesus have half-unconsciously strayed into the narratives of his serious-minded reporters. We are

glad even of these faint hints of what the Master's humor must have been, because to-day this sense seems to us an indispensable quality in every broad, lovable character.

Such humorous appreciation as that we have been speaking of springs from sublime faith in God, from the absolute assurance that in spite of adverse appearances God's great, good plan is being surely worked out to its final consummation everywhere. Faith, hope, love, and the sense of humor, no one of these can be present in its fullness perhaps without the other, but all are necessary to one who is seriously struggling to help this sinful, suffering world. There is a humorous side to ignorance, jealousy, thanklessness, and immaturity, and these are the chief causes of worry with those who are

sincerely trying to work for the good of society. Blessed is the man who can bear the sin of the world upon his heart till he has done his best to heal it, and then, when it threatens to load him down with useless worry, is able to side-track it all on to the lines of humor, and laugh with all his soul at the hypocrites with their trumpets and the Pharisee with his preposterous prayer.

The great moral issues of the life outside of us have, then, their essential humor, their comic irony, the thought of which is ever a relief in times of depression to bring us back from desperate, fanatic earnestness to human sanity again, and to the remembrance of the great, good, abiding, changeless facts of life.

But our own lives are even more fertile in humor for us than is the life of

the world. The absence of a sense of humor is almost always accompanied by self-conceit, because the poor man defective in this respect accepts himself among the serious facts of life. All incidents which have happened to him have become thereby events of general interest.

But as long as you can genuinely laugh at yourself, at your ridiculous pretensions to be somebody and know something, at the terrible disparity between your friends' opinion of your powers and your own more intimate knowledge of your own slipshod, faulty work — as long as you can sincerely recognize at times with laughter your own insignificance in the universe, as long as you refuse to take yourself entirely seriously, so long is your soul not lost. Stevenson could heartily laugh at

himself; Thackeray could wonder why, as he said, people did not discover what an old fraud he really was. Even Sir Andrew Aguecheek, in Shakespeare's "Twelfth Night," is not hopeless, because, as Dowden says, "through his soft veil of silliness and imbecility glimmers for a moment the faint suspicion that he is an ass."

So far we have considered two great sources of the refreshing stream of the humor of life — first, in the faith that while the world is not finished (hence the incongruity), yet it seems to be coming all right (hence the possibility of laughter); second, in the vast dissimilarity between the ideal which we know in our mind constitutes good work and our own laborious and much vaunted achievement. But a great portion of the genuine humor of the world

arises from a third source — from a recognition of those great spheres of life which are neither moral nor immoral, but simply non-moral.

We have seen that the sense of humor saves us from fanaticism and egotism; from this third point of view it is an emotional antiseptic and delivers us from all eager and shrill intensity. We are saved thereby from the slush of sentimentalism. There are facts in life which ought not to be made the text for a sermon, but rather the subject for a joke. The æsthetic bride and bridegroom of Du Maurier's picture in "Punch" are discussing their newly acquired six-mark teapot with intense expressions of artistic fervor — it is "divine" and "consummate." At last the bride, carried away by her enthusiasm, says, "O Algernon, let us live

up to it!" A sense of humor saves us from praying that we may live up to teapots and from everlasting preaching. Humor from this point of view is the mark of the man who is relating things to another and so doing a little thinking. Wit brings into relation the superficial incongruities of things in a manner to excite our delighted surprise. The pun, for instance, relates words to one another in unexpected, incongruous ways. Humor finds in the deeper things of life the same unexpected likenesses and unlikenesses, the same dissimilarity between appearance and reality, the same oddities and vagabond relations, as wit finds in mere words and intellectual technique. Harmony in the relations of thought excites our admiration, difficulty in relating facts to one another excites

mental effort and logical thought. But every now and again we come upon a relation in the world of thought which does not excite us to admiration by its harmony, or jar upon us and stimulate us by its difficulty and mystery, but which makes us laugh by its very defiance of all laws and "gives us a sudden glory for a moment, a holiday from the schoolroom of exact thought and serious effort."

Humor in modern times is penetrating deeper and deeper into life. The mere pun is despised. Humor is becoming more and more thoughtful. By this is meant that thought had penetrated deeply into the mysteries of life before the humorous relation of things to each other was discovered. Humor presupposes certain trains of thought, and these presuppositions are

often best conveyed to the popular mind through their gratuitous jangling in humor rather than in their harmonious logical sequence. Many of the most noxious errors have been laughed out of court. The recognition of this great holiday world of humor is an essential in the happy and useful life to-day. It is often the third way of escape in life's most unpleasant dilemmas. It saves one from the necessity of telling many a lie and committing many a discourtesy. Escape to this world of humor when busybodies come asking you questions they have no business to ask; when the insincere, thoughtless questioner tries to disprove the noble faith of life. When the world has grown dark for you and you are lonely, do not enter upon long evenings of auto-suggestive worrying about things in gen-

eral, but take down your Don Quixote and read how “Don Quixote could not help smiling at the simplicity of Sancho.” It is the mark of breadth of mind, of the mind that tries to see things in all their relations. It is the great humanizer, it is absolutely democratic, it can laugh at everything except the ultimate harmonies of life which excite worship and admiration. It is the mark of the idealist who fears no comparisons even the most incongruous, because he is so sure that the ultimate reality is noble and right. It shows us the funny side of the worst misfortune. Stevenson with a smile could call the disease which he knew was killing him, “Bloody Jack.” It permits a continual innocent escape from restraint and convention. And yet, like all valuable possessions, it is

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most dangerous. It is much easier to be a righteous man without it than with it. It is only safe in the life of one who loves the great harmonies of existence, honor and kindness and morality and justice, a thousand times more than he does all the “quips and cranks and wanton wiles” of humor. Yet to succeed in life one must know what things are not to be taken seriously, and to the man in tune with the universe there is always a point of view from which “Life's a Jest.”

## LAPSES FROM THE PROSAIC

### SUNDAY WEATHER

**D**INNA gang to kirk  
When it rains,  
Ye micht catch  
Rheumatic pains!

Bide t'hame  
When it's cauld,  
Lest ye dee  
When ye're auld!

The kirk's nae place  
When it's hot,  
The folks micht think  
Ye cared a lot!

When it's fine  
Leave the Lord,  
Gang a-ridin'  
In yer Ford!

## LAPSES FROM THE PROSAIC

Ye like kirk fine  
Believe in God,  
But canna gae,  
The weather's odd!

Ye're no to blame,  
It's in ither hands,  
Ye bet the Lord  
Understands!

### A SCOTCH BLESSING

“IF after kirk you bide a wee,  
There's some wad like to speak to ye.  
If after kirk you rise and flee,  
We'll all seem cold and stiff to ye.  
The one that's in the seat wi' ye  
Is stranger here than you, maybe;  
All here hae got their fears and cares;  
Add you your soul unto our prayers;  
Be you our angel unawares.”

THE REAL HERO

Oh, it's great to be a hero, to lift your  
hat and bow,  
To write your reminiscences and tell  
the people how!  
But it's hard to take the off-side on the  
questions of your day,  
If you want to be a hero — there is no  
other way.

Oh, it's great to be a hero and to hear  
the people shout,  
And to know your statue 'll stand in  
the market-place without!  
But to raise eternal marble from the  
world's despiséd clay  
Takes the toil of the creator, means  
the cross upon the way.

Oh, it's great to be a hero, in some  
other far-off year,

## LAPSES FROM THE PROSAIC

When you know how things have come  
out and can hear the people  
cheer!

But how blank the dearest faces, how  
the wise ones looked away

When trembling lips first stammered  
what is common truth to-day.

## LOVE'S SECRET

A SIMPLE word of sooth is this;  
Love liveth still in giving bliss.

Who for himself bliss doth demand  
He killeth love right out of hand.  
Love loveth joy in other eyes;  
Joy can be found no otherwise.

## THE SECRET OF THE MORAL TRAINING OF CHILDREN

PROBABLY the only way you can do people any real good is to get their great-grandparents into the primary department of your Sunday-School. Morals and Californian red-wood forests and languages and liturgies all exist in that world where a thousand years is as one day.

In the School of the Universe the pupils are races, not individuals. With all our faults and virtues, we parents are just the last edition but one of our ancestors. These later editions differ essentially from the previous ones probably only in a couple of new sections, or a few verbal emendations in the family grammar. They include for

good or evil the net result of every edition since the first. It is not, indeed, so much the naughtiness of our ancestors as their goodness that enrages me. I can forgive them the naughty streak we all have in us, but I can hardly forgive them for the way they taught their children to be good. My greatest objection to the parents of the past is that so many of them allowed themselves to believe that their own comfort and their children's morality were one and the same thing. If the adults in any home enjoyed comfortable peace, that showed that the children in that home were good. The world exists for adults, they thought. Children are interlopers at the best; goodness for them consists largely in the recognition of this fact. Morality for children consists in silence before their eld-

## THE MORAL TRAINING OF CHILDREN

ers and in unquestioning obedience to adult commands. Canon Ainger when a small boy preached his first sermon to children. He summed up in it this view of morality which was learned so well by every child, when he took for his text the words from some unfamiliar passage of Holy Writ, "Do sit still and keep quiet!"

That such an absolute misunderstanding of the golden age of life should be possible seems to us almost incredible. We have ceased patronizing children. It is the age of the child: your solemn stupid grown-up is the only true interloper. A sense of humor has returned to us, and we adults all recognize now with laughter that children have far more of the essential things of life to teach us than we have to teach them.

## THE MORAL TRAINING OF CHILDREN

How the angels must have blasphemed over the morally improving lesson books of the past! Here is “The Children’s Friend” for 1787, which tells us of Robin, aged six, whose activity had in some way made his parents feel uncomfortable, so that his father said of him: “His principles are quite corrupt; every one will hate him utterly, and not a soul assist him in his need. He will commit some wicked action, and be punished for it by his country. God grant I may be dead before this comes to pass!” Janeway, another moral instructor of the same age, suggests to parents, “Put your children upon learning their catechism and the Scriptures and getting to pray and weep by themselves.” Janeway also adds, by way of encouragement in this course, “Your child is never too

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little to go to hell.” The mother of the Wesleys was perhaps the champion moral trainer of children in this respect. She felt it was their duty to leave their elders in peace, and so she tells us that her children “were taught when turned a year old (and some before) to fear the rod and cry softly.” She does not add, however, that a majority of her nineteen children were wicked enough to thwart that stern discipline by succumbing to it in their early years. Only six survived it. But in spite of this erroneous idea that the comfort of the parents is the measure of the morality of the children, it is interesting to find that practically every biography of every great human being which comes to light begins with the tale of worried and bewildered parents. We must all sympathize with

Mark Twain's pious mother, whose son Samuel, as she said, "gave her more trouble than all the other children put together," when she found that her son's highest feelings about the sanctuary were that "church ain't worth shucks, but it's better than goin' to school."

Mistral's poor mother had to fish him out three times in one day from the same pond where the lilies grew, and clothe him each time in a clean suit of clothes and make him promise each time not to go near the lilies again. At the opening of the biography of practically every great soul there is the self-same picture of the anxious, tear-stained faces of the parents full of reproach and suffering, as the mother says to her strangely acting child: "Son, why hast thou thus dealt with

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us? Behold thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing."

But if we dismiss this idea that the moral training of children consists in the enforcement of rules for making their elders comfortable, what is the true principle for the moral education of children to-day?

It is a hard one. It does not tend to comfortable afternoon naps and serious grown-up talks at meal-times. It is that you should love your children. I admit, it is hard to do. I often pity a mother as I see her with her first baby girl. How hard it is going to be for her to get to like that child. Oh, the tootsy-wootsy stage is mostly cuddly and physical and easy. But when it comes to *l'enfant terrible* stage, to the gawky, self-sufficient, cruel, slangy, high-school stage, to the silly, sentimental, secre-

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tive stage, is she really going to be able to like that girl, to love her? For the only way races can be trained morally is by love between individuals. The problem for us parents is how to keep friends with our children. The highest compliment I ever saw paid by a son to his father was paid a little while ago at a wedding, where a son chose his own father as best man, saying that he knew no one else with whom he was more chummy and for whom he felt more of the spirit of comradeship.

The greatest problem in the moral education of children to-day is the selfishness of parents. They do not like their children enough to be friends with them. They shirk the anxiety and responsibility of loving. Men want to play golf with other Olympians on

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Saturday afternoons instead of playing Indians with George and Harry. Women want to read the last best seller to themselves instead of reading Peter Rabbit to the little toddler, who is sent back to the nursery to play with the everlasting blocks.

A plaything is something you can take up and throw down as it suits your caprice and humor; you take good care of it because of the pride and joy you have in it and the pleasure it gives you; and children do make such bright, sweet, pretty, living dollies!

But a real friend is one who can never make too many demands upon your time or patience. You are the life of your friend's life. You influence him by taking into your mind his ideas, by trying to understand them and in so doing modifying them. He then takes

your modifications back again into his world and views them from his point of view, so modifying them again, and so on *ad infinitum*. And the process is love, and the product is truth.

The greatest stroke of luck that could ever fall upon any ordinary, stock, shop-soiled adult would be to be really the confidant and friend of a little two or three year old boy or girl. To be able to be this is the consummation of all literature and all art and all knowledge.

Better than all mere pictures or poetry or music is this glimpse into the primeval, into the race-consciousness, into the heart of the budding flower, which is the very source of all the beauty and glory of the world.

You will understand, then, that the reason that your little boy kicked the

hole in the lawn was not that he was a “spiteful little brute,” but that when he did it he “was a horse,” and you will modify this idea of his with one of your own as to the unsuitability of the lawn as a place for hitching horses.

You will not recognize the straight honest lie your little girl tells you, looking you full in the face, as a proof that “no child is too young to go to hell,” but you will try to enter into the poetical logic of her reading of the situation, and wonder, when all is said, whether she was not nearer the truth than you were.

Ah, the only real problem in the whole situation is this: How can we grown-ups keep our membership in both organizations, that of “The Toilers,” and that of “The Children”? How can we be efficient servants of our

## THE MORAL TRAINING OF CHILDREN

own day and also friends of the new day, capable of being both J. Jones, Esq., and "a big black bear"? Probably your occasional identity with the latter terrifying delight of childhood will be the only fact about you that will get you into heaven.

Don't be solemn. Don't be staid and conventional. Get off your pedestal. Fool a little. Love much. You will not succeed very well. But down the page of history, sometime, somewhere, there will appear a great race whose success, little as they will acknowledge it, will be due to the fact that they are your great-grandchildren.

THE END

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